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THE

DANGER

OF THE

POLITICAL BALANCE

OF

EUROPE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF THE

KING OF SWEDEN;

WITH

A PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE,

AND ADDITIONAL NOTES:

BY THE RIGHT HON.

LORD MOUNTMORRES.

SECOND EDITION, CORRECTED.

OPINIONUM COMMENTA DELET DIES, VERITATIS
JUDICIA CONFIRMAT— CIC.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. BECKET, PALL-MALL.

1791.

TO

Lord Visct. TORRINGTON,

&c. &c. &c.

PERMIT me, my Lord, to address a translation of the Dauger of the Political [illegible] of Europe to Your Lordship—and to hope that you will accept it as a tribute of private friendship, and as a mark of just regard and esteem, from a well-wisher to his country.

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PERMIT me, my Lord, to address a translation of the Danger of the Political Balance of Europe to your Lordship—and to hope that you will accept it as a tribute of private friendship, and as a mark of just regard and esteem, from a well-wisher to his country.

EXAMPLES of men who enter voluntarily and gratuitously into diplomatic employments are rare: neither are there many instances to be found of Foreign Ministers who discharge the duties of their offices with laborious application, unwearied diligence, private credit, and general satisfaction, in the countries from whence they are delegated, and to which they are deputed.

IN considering your Lordship in that description of Foreign Ministers,

Ministers, I shall assuredly adopt an opinion from my own belief and conviction, from my observations during your long and constant residence at Brussels. A general remark ought not to create particular offence: our embassies have not always been filled with able men, which I have often regreted, in different parts of Europe. The extent and sphere of compliment is limited, to men who consider it as one of the privileges of rank and independence to speak the truth.

Faithful copies of the portraits of Sir William Temple and the Count D'Avaux, it is true, are not easily found; but a great country requires able Ministers in Foreign Departments.

I have the honour to be,

Your Lordship's obedient,

Humble Servant,

MOUNTMORRES.

London,
April 23, 1791.

PRELIMINARY.

THE spirit of the first works frequently evaporates in translations, as the essence of ether is often lost, when poured from one vial into another. The Translator offers this work in an English dress, with a diffident hand, to the impartial tribunal of the Public. If he shall have succeeded in representing the genius and capacity which pervade

the Treatise on the Danger of the Political Balance of Power, he conceives that he shall have given satisfaction to the intelligent, information to the political, and amusement to the many.

In this work, the rapid progress of Russia, in somewhat more than half a century, from civilization to preponderance in the general system, the dethronement of Peter the Third, the accession of Catherine, the subjection of Courland, the appoint-

ment

ment of a King of Poland, the nominee of Russia, the partition and dismemberment of that country, the Leonine convention with Frederick the Great, and with Austria, the Turkish wars, the policy of the Czarina, the interests of Denmark, the constitution, the character, the revolution, and present state of Sweden; above all, the agitation of the great question, of the consequences of the subjection of Turkey, and the establishment of Russia in the Mediterranean,

and

and its importance to the maritime Powers, are most happily displayed.

THE idea of any State obtaining a general ascendant may, or may not, be a chimera; but human affairs revolve in the same circle; what has happened may happen again; and novelty is but forgetfulness. History would be the amusement of children, and not the instruction of men, if the past did not prepare us for future events, and guide us through

through political mazes, with antecedent information.

The Russian troops have appeared with the greatest effect in the wars of Europe; Sweden and Prussia have, at different periods, experienced their obstinacy in the battles of Pultowa, and of Kunersdorff.*

With

* The Russians, in truth, had the advantage in this battle, but it cost them dear, (says Frederick the Great) the King lost ten thousand men killed and wounded. If the Russians had known how to profit by their advantage, and had pursued these discouraged

WITH Russia we have had connections, treaties, and alliances, since the first intercourse with that country, in the time of Edward the Sixth. In a political view, little advantage has flowed from that connection; perhaps the only instance where she appeared on the political theatre in our favour, was at the close

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couraged troops, they would have ruined the Prussian army. Though the Prussian troops were well posted, yet having been twice beaten, they retained no strength to recollection of their former losses.

Ouvrages Posthumes, vol iv, p. 37 & 46.

close of the succession war, in 1747, when a body of Russian troops were on their march to counteract the effects of German discipline in the French troops, and the victories of Saxe, and Lowendhal, in Flanders.

Our trade with Russia for naval stores, according to this work, produces a million of unfavourable balance against this country; by more accurate accounts from our own Custom-House books, eight hundred and twenty thousand

* Chalmers

the

* Lords Journal, vol. xvii. p. 485.

the rest of their species in other respects; but fortuitous advantages do not alter the real character—fame and reputation are prizes which may be allotted to any description of men; and we must admire those who quit exalted stations to enter into the common list, who start in the popular race, and labour to gain the prize by surpassing mankind in the beaten tracks, and the common high roads of life.

Of royal authors the cata-

logue is small, though splendid instances occur in the annals of literature. The arm which wielded the most successful sword, directed a pen with similar abilities:—the Commentaries of Cæsar were dictated by the same spirit with which he fought. If an enlightened period was possessed of a sage whose divine genius ranged through the immensity of space, revealed the mysteries of nature, and gave to time and to motion mathematical laws; the annals

of the thirteenth century, the age of obscurity and darkness, record the science of Alphonsus the Wise, king of Arragon, the author of the Tables which bear his name; who cultivated philosophy and the abstract sciences upon a throne. If Frederick the Great appeared the foremost character on the theatre of Europe, it is well known that he has eternized his fame in a posthumous work, dedicated to Candour and to Truth: the Prince who has surprised Europe, with

the

this eclat of his victories, with the contrast of the Twelfth Charles, without his temerity, will not lose reputation, upon an attentive perusal of this work; and the Public must be pleased with the production of a monarch, who appears to bring the genius of his great predecessor to appear once more upon the stage, and to revive the glories of Gustavus Adolphus.

To the just remarks and judicious criticisms of the Editors

of the Monthly Review, for January last, the corrections in the Second Edition of this Translation are due; and all their proposed amendments have been studiously attended to: most of those defects were typographical errors, and were principally to be ascribed to the negligence of the printing of the First Edition, which, it must be acknowledged, was very defective.

THOSE who are used more to speak in public assemblies, than

to

to compose for the Press, may claim some indulgence; but no rank, nor his situation can excuse negligence or inaccuracy, agreeable to their just observation: nay more, fortuitous advantages serve only to place defects in stronger relief. This acknowledgement is due from a candid mind, and it is hoped they will receive it as an *amende honorable*.

Touching the charge of an affectation of Gallicisms, of French phrases and idioms, it may

may be said, that it is difficult for men who are habituated to reading French, who are fond of French books, and who admire the style of their Historians, still more for those who are occupied in translations, to avoid them: a great authority may be cited, if not to justify, at least to palliate defects which are incidental to particular habits and situations: an author, eminent for the charms and elegance of his composition, whose style is perhaps the most becoming a man

man of rank and fashion, of any writer in our language, a writer who has been approved by time, and admired by succeeding ages, has not escaped a similar animadversion; even Sir William Temple has been charged by a great Critic, with the affected adoption of French words and phrases, and censured as an innovator in our language, by Johnson.*

THOUGH

* This curious criticism is to be found in his Dictionary, under the word Draped, which is derived from the French verb *Drapper*,

Though the beauty and elegance of the style of the following work must be apparent to every reader of taste; though this short map of a large circuit is most judicious and comprehensive; though the original has been generally admired as a master-piece; yet, the Translator, who professes a sincere attachment

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Drapper, to jeer or to rally: and it is used in this way by Sir William Temple, in describing a conversation with Charles the Second. Dr. Johnson, in giving the etymology of this word, says, that it had been used in that sense, by the innovator Temple, whom no one had followed.

tachment to truth, paramount to every other consideration, cannot take upon him, in any wise to authenticate all the allegations which are contained in this performance: it may be considered as the manifesto of the great Prince to whom it is ascribed, in his late contention with Russia; as such, it may well claim the attention and regard of a discerning Public: but, in this, and in every work of this kind, the veracity of historical details, must depend

depend upon the production of authentic documents.

As the amount of our commerce with Russia, and of the balance of trade, is a matter of such importance to this Country, the following account of it, from three eminent political Writers, may not be unacceptable to the Public:

According to Chalmers, the balance of trade against England in favour of Russia, in 1783,

1783, amounted to 822,607l. according to Playfair, the Exports amounted to 300,000l. and the Imports from Russia to 1,200,000l. which left a balance of 900,000l. against England in 1780.† in Zimmerman's Political Survey of Europe, the value of the Exports is stated at 1,606,688l. and the value of Imports at 233,998l. in 1785, according to the Custom-House Account presented to the House of

* Chalmers's Estimate, p. 220
† Playfair's Tables of Commerce, p. 41.

of Commons in 1787. ‡. Upon an average of the calculations of those respectable Writers, the balance against this country may be stated at somewhat more than one million, at the present period, with a reasonable approximation to truth.

‡ Zimmerman, p. 31.

CONTENTS.

CHAP. I.

INTRODUCTION—Russian Politics before the Reign of Catherine the Second. *From Page* 1 *to* 17

CHAP. II.

History of Peter the Third and of Prince Iwan—Accession of Catherine. *From Page* 18 *to* 75

CHAP. III.

The Usurpation of the Duchy of Courland. *From Page* 76 *to* 89

CHAP. IV.

Affairs of Poland—Nomination of Stanislaus the Third by Russia.

From Page 90 *to* 117

CHAP. V.

The Influence of the Russian Court in Denmark. *From Page* 118 *to* 125

CHAP. VI.

The Partition of Poland.—

From Page 126 *to* 143

CHAP. VII.

Turkish Wars—Oriental System of Russia. *From Page* 144 *to* 185

CHAP. VIII.

Russian Influence in Sweden—Swedish Constitution—Affairs of Finland.

From Page 186 *to* 203

CHAP. IX.

Negotiations of England and Russia with the Ozarina—Interests of the Maritime Powers—the Importance of the Establishment of Russia, as a Naval Power, in the Mediterranean. From Page 204 to 211.

CHAP. X.

Conclusion—General Remarks—Summary of this Work.

From Page 212 to 229.

DANGER

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OF

EUROPE.

CHAP. I.

INTRODUCTION.---RE[illegible] POLITICS
BEFORE THE REIGN[illegible] GATHERING
THE SECOND.

A KINGDOM, almost unknown in Europe during the last century, and gradually aggrandized at the expence of all her neighbours, whose civiliza-

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CHAP. I.

INTRODUCTION.---RUSSIAN POLITICS BEFORE THE REIGN OF CATHERINE THE SECOND.

A KINGDOM, almost unknown in Europe during the last century, and gradually aggrandized at the expence of all her neighbours, whose civiliza-

tion contributed only to make conquests, has menaced, for forty years, the Political Balance of Power:—Sweden, Poland, Turkey, Prussia, and Germany, have experienced the effects of her enterprising spirit; all the Courts of Europe had experienced her insolence before that tragedy, to which Catherine the Second owed her elevation to the Throne.

SINCE that period, from the Caspian Sea to the Streights of Gibraltar, there is no country of which Russia has not disturbed the tranquillity, or alarmed the precaution:

every

every year has produced new designs, which arose evidently from one general plan, and their execution has found no other obstacle, than that which has arisen from the revenues of that Empire, which were often stretched so far as to need a temporary repose from the abuse of power, and the prodigality of Government: but their exhausted revenues have not created the security of other States; for, the hand of power, tired with the exertions of open violence, prepared for them a war not less dangerous—a war of negotiations. Ceasing to become the prey of the sword, they had still to encounter

her artifices, her intrigues, and negotiations: the interior of that empire presented a theatre of divisions, of troubles, and disorders, of which the springs and machines were fabricated at Petersburg; at length, after having excited power against power, and interest against interest, in the neighbouring States, the Empress of Russia predominated alone in that vast anarchy, dictated laws through her Ambassadors, and prevented all combinations of resistance.

This portrait is engraved, from a faithful representation of the last twenty years history of the North,

and

and of the Levant.—Europe has seen at one time, the Ottoman Porte menaced with an invasion, of which Asia herself might apprehend the consequences; her Tributaries corrupted, her Allies bribed, or intimidated, the Crimea enslaved, Sweden under the yoke of a faction, subservient to Russia, a faction discomfited without being altogether subdued, and reviving by the same protection which has plunged that kingdom into a universal decline; Poland, equally punished from the defects of her Constitution, devoured by Russian troops, enslaved, dismembered, treated in every light as a Russian province;

vince; Courland reduced to the low-
est state; the Councils of Denmark
governed by the same influence;
Prussia insulated in the midst of two
vast empires, whose masqued bat-
teries could play, on the first alarm,
upon the great Protector of the Ger-
manic liberties; the rest of Europe,
tranquil and indifferent, acting the
part of a spectator, but not that of
an arbiter.

In this crisis, the Ottoman Porte,
tired of buying peace with vast con-
cessions, which enabled her enemies
to compel her to make farther pur-
chases, was roused from her lethar-

gy,

gy, and her example awakened other Powers, who participated secretly in her just resentment; each of them was anxious, and engaged in the hope, or apprehension, of what they had to gain or to lose in this conflict, in which a moiety of Europe was interested; and from Italy, to the verge of the Baltic, this great question was discussed:—*What would be the consequence of a war, which would spread its baneful effects, in limiting the overbearing power of Russia?* Where facts speak, a chain of reasoning is useless: history is here alone the torch of precaution; from the operation of the same causes the same

effects are produced; the events which have passed, prepare us for those which are to come; and hence the solution of the problem of the consequences of the present war, demands the examination of this original question:—*What have been the permanent principles of the Russian Court, and their effects upon the reign of the Second Catherine?*

To resolve this question, we must reject the sophisms of inconsiderate politicians, and the allegations of manifestos; truth here depends upon public notoriety. Let us examine the origin of consequences; the examination

amination will lead us to conclusions upon the due stability of the Balance of Power, which must affect those Powers who are most inattentive to their own interests.

In the period of the middle of the reign of Lewis the Fourteenth, those who had heard of the name of Russia, annexed no other idea to it, than that which is connected with a description of Tartars and of Cossacks; but when a man of more energy than genius, formed to govern more by the impulse of his passions than by the slow empire of reason, a successful warrior and a tyrannic legislator, had

had raised up this vast colossus, which had been buried in a barbarous obscurity, they sprung at once to a station of preponderance and of power, before Europe could well recognise their character.

This new empire entered rapidly into the general system, and immediately announced their predominating designs, with forces proportioned to their extensive ambition: at their head appeared a despot, the absolute master of the eighth part of the habitable globe, of opulent mines, of a hundred provinces, whose natives were inured to all extremities of rigors

gors of climate, of hunger, of want; warlike, from the savage habits of their laws; disciplined by the severe pressure of despotism; insensible of fear as they were insensible of misery; obstinate in combat; strangers to desertion; calculated for conquest and destruction, more than for defensive war; and substituting fanaticism for emulation and patriotism. Such were the people whom Peter the Great collected from the north of Europe, and from the northern limits of Germany, when he founded the capital of his empire at Petersburg.

FROM that period, the views and exertions of Russia were enlarged; they were no longer bounded by incursions into the Asiatic countries: mistress of a marine in the Baltic, her influence was an interesting concern to all the maritime powers; her numerous and warlike armies could easily invade Poland, Sweden, Denmark; desolate that part of those States which should oppose her, and second the efforts of their enemies: from hence issues the necessary influence of the Court of Petersburg among the southern and western powers, who may engage in the hostilities of the North, or of Germany;

as-

assuredly the most penetrating politician could hardly believe, at the peace of Newstadt, in 1721, that twenty-five years afterwards, a King of France should give the daughter of the First Peter the title of the Mediatress of Europe, that a Russian army should approach the Rhine at the requisition of England, and that, in a subsequent war, the Russians should pillage the capital of Brandenburg.

From the same causes, the alliance of this Court was solicited, according to exigencies; the other extremity of Europe courted her alliance,

liance, and there were few political interests in which Russia might not engage, since she weighed so considerably in the political system of the neighbouring States, and in the general balance of Europe.

She united the advantages of being seldom liable to act upon the defensive, to find weak States placed as feeble barriers between her and the neighbouring Powers—States either poor or divided: by evading the laws of nations, she could master these obstacles, and carry on her operations at a great distance from home.

Her

HER forces, her position promised an ascendant in negotiations, and her security gave a hardy boldness in her arrangements with other States. Treaties became subordinate to her interests, her Allies were changed every ten years, and no Court formed the same coalition of haughtiness, and of artifice.

THE last years of the first Elizabeth, substantiated that danger with which the liberties of Germany, and of the whole North, was menaced; an alliance which resembled a conspiracy, was secretly formed by the Czarina, and the houses of Austria

and

and Saxony, against the King of Prussia; France engaged in this confederacy, and penetrated into the western, while Russia invaded the northern parts of Germany:—governed by the same faction, which had annihilated the royal authority, and shed the blood of the most illustrious of her families, Sweden, straying from her true interest, united herself with her natural enemies, and attacked Prussian Pomerania; while Russia invaded that kingdom. It would be easy to foretel what would have been the consequences, had they not been prevented by the genius of that hero

whom

whom they attempted to subdue, and by the event which placed the Third Peter on the Throne of his Aunt.

CHAP. II.

HISTORY OF PETER THE THIRD.—AND OF PRINCE IWAN.—ACCESSION OF CATHERINE THE SECOND.

THIS Prince, who for some time was only known in Europe, through the medium of the calumnies of his assassins—this Prince, born and educated in Germany, had all the inclinations of his native country, and a contempt for his new subjects.—Master of Holstein, a member consequently of the German Empire, he added weight to the Russian Crown,

Crown, interfered in the German system, in his own personal right, and fortified his influence by new alliances with the Northern Powers. Happily, this prospect did not inspire him with ambition; he was influenced only by a just resentment against Denmark, and by his friendship for Frederick the Great. Policy leagued with his moderation: for, the ruinous war which Elizabeth waged against the King of Prussia, had cost her three hundred thousand men, and above thirty millions of roubles.

Though the Third Peter had no

other title to public esteem than that of saving a Prince, upon whose preservation the maintenance of the political equilibre depended, his memory should be regarded and esteemed. In some venal writings, the productions of fanciful historians, his attachment to the King of Prussia was ridiculed as the effect of enthusiasm, and the puerile love of emulation:—but assuredly an enthusiasm for, and admiration of the qualities of a man, who wrought such prodigies of wisdom and intrepidity, was very excusable—and the heroism of friendship is a rare quality amongst Kings.

This profound respect and regard for Frederick the Great, demonstrated judgment and sensibility in the Third Peter: the enemies of Prussia, at Petersburg, had signalized themselves by the persecution of the young Czar, during the reign of Elizabeth. This Prince had accordingly counteracted their measures, and his subsequent conduct, in supporting the King of Prussia, was perfectly consistent. This last Monarch was now in danger; the new English Minister (Lord Bute) threatened him with desertion, and his safety seemed to depend on his Turkish negotiations, on the capricious

motions of the Khan of the Tartars. Let us see in what terms, the hero so renowned for his knowledge of the human character, has appreciated the friendship and generosity of the Third Peter.

" The King had cultivated the " friendship of the Great Duke, " when he was only Sovereign of " Holstein; and by a grateful sen- " sibility, rare amongst men, still " more uncommon amongst Princes, " this Prince had preserved a grate- " ful heart, of which he had even " given proofs, in the seven years " war; for, it was he that princi-

" pally

" pally contributed to the retreat of
" the Mareschal Apraxin, when he
" had worsted General Lewald, and
" had retired towards Poland. ——
" During these troubles, the Prince
" declined going to Council, of
" which he was a Member, that he
" might not participate in the mea-
" sures which he disapproved, a-
" gainst Prussia. The King did not
" keep up the ordinary intercourse
" of politicians with this Prince, but
" acted with that cordiality which
" friendship requires, and which
" forms its most amiable appendage;
" the virtues of Peter were an ex-
" ception to the rules of politicians;

" happy would it have been, if they
" had made an exception for him."

Such was the testimony, rendered to the memory of Peter the Third, twenty-five years after his catastrophe, by the first, and most penetrating genius, with the coolness of age, and in the calm of reflection, in a posthumous work, dedicated to Justice and to Truth; the illustrious Author could not be supposed to paint the character of the late Emperor of Russia, from the illusions of friendship; and, were such a supposition possible, he would be contradicted by the well known authenticated

testimonials

testimonials and histories of that unfortunate Monarch.

The first misfortune of this Prince was to be adopted by Elizabeth, to mount one day

Sur ce Throne glissant, dont vingt Rois descendirent—

The second, to have been led from Holstein, to become a slave at Elizabeth's Court! and his Wife was the third misfortune. His Imperial Aunt obtained the Crown by a revolution stained with injustice, and was always in dread of a counter-revolution; her Nephew was a prisoner of State. The Cabinet was barred,

and

and its councils were concealed; all intercourse with him was suspected; his German servants were deprived of the comforts of his conversation, and their attachment was a principle of disgrace; surrounded by enemies, the right of approach was only given to spies, observers, and betrayers of his conversation:—his matrimonial misunderstanding, left the Prince without domestic consolation, and reviewing some troops at Orienbaum, became his only recreation.

His complaints gave rise to an intrigue, which serves to lead us through the mazes of those deplorable

ble events, which ultimately deprived the Emperor of his sceptre, and his life.

The Chancellor Bestuchef, the great confidant of Elizabeth, was the Grand Duke's avowed enemy; his insolence in contriving mortifications, made him tremble at the prospect of a new reign; he formed the project of substituting the Prince Paul, son of Catherine the Second, under her regency, in the place of Peter the Third. Bestuchef presupposed the success of his plot, from a multitude of groundless calumnies against the Grand Duke, and the favourable

vourable reception of Elizabeth, and lastly, upon the intention of Catherine to deprive her husband of the crown, and to appropriate the regency to herself. It would be presumptuous to advance, that this Princess was concerned in this plot; but assuredly Bestuchef must have believed it, for he never would have encountered her resistance. Elizabeth, doubtful at first, assumed a more dignified conduct, and supported her nephew against the Chancellor; and an incautious expression of the Empress Elizabeth is still cited against her. "I know "my nephew," said she one day, to the slanderers of the Prince, "I have "nothing

"nothing to fear from a good heart;
"I am not so well acquainted with
"my niece."

BESTUCHEF, afterwards disgraced by Elizabeth, was excepted out of the amnesty, upon the accession of the Third Peter; but by the favour of Catherine he was recalled from exile.

THE preceding facts, which depend upon the authority of authentic historians, describe the first clouds of that tempest in which the Third Peter was involved; prudence could alone preserve him from the rocks

and

and breakers through which he passed;—but among his other virtues, he found one, namely, Confidence, which caused his destruction.

NOTWITHSTANDING the reproaches justly cast upon that monarch, from the excess of his good qualities, spite of the blame with which he is attacked, upon the unfortunate career of his debaucheries, and of the slanders which hatred and remorse have attached to his memory, few Princes have commenced their reign with more wisdom: his first public actions expiated the defects of many preceding

preceding years, and they had only six months duration.

SIBERIA, and the State prisons, were filled with distinguished captives, victims of the favourites, and ministers of Elizabeth. The Emperor redressed their wrongs. The illustrious Munich was recalled, and reinstated; Biron, Lestock, and those who had offended him in the late reign, were restored to liberty, by a Prince who extended his clemency to the insolent favorites of his Aunt; the first qualities of his government were justice and clemency; and his magnanimity to some Prussian Officers,

cess, whom the fortune of war had deprived of liberty, and who groaned in extreme servitude, is too well known to be here repeated.

The commencement of his reign promised zeal for promoting Order, and discovered application, vigilance and activity—he was early at the senate, at the different offices, and set an example of industry, by his superintendance in various departments: the First Peter was his model, and his plans formed the chart of his legislation—to him Russia owes the wisest ordinances, which

which have decorated that government.

Not satisfied with limiting the despotism of his Officers, he abridged his own power, by abolishing the Secret Council of Chancery, a State Inquisition, which, upon the least suspicion, imprisoned, tortured, or executed natives and strangers. He was a warm friend to toleration; and he framed that memorable decree, which enfranchised the Nobles from compulsive service, and permitted them to travel without the royal permission.

PRECIPITATION, it is true, accompanied some of these salutary innovations, particularly those relating to the Clergy. The secularization of Monks was adopted from the design of Peter the Great. The Emperor secured to the regular Clergy competent stipends, from their immense revenues; and with the surplus he founded schools and military hospitals. Reason and policy approved these measures, and the reformation of superstitious worship; but those hasty changes shocked the customs and manners of the country; the strong hand of the First Peter could scarcely have effected their execution;

ecution: but the Emperor accelerated those reforms, without reflecting, that they gave pretexts to the designing, to render his government unpopular.

The regiments of Ismailoff and Preobrazinski formed a body of guards, in barracks in Petersburg; licentious and ill-disciplined, their want of subordination enervated their loyalty; and in former revolutions, they were sold to the highest purchaser. Peter the Third conceived, that a rigorous discipline would secure their obedience, and prevent

the disorders of a body so badly organized; he introduced the Prussian discipline, modelled them after his Holstein Guards, and secured order by severity. Had this discipline been firmly established, their fidelity would have been secured: corruption is difficult in a corps inured to the daily detail of their duty; but the reformation was of necessity entrusted to German, in preference to Russian Officers.—Those strangers were considered as usurpers; their favour became the object of ridicule, and the national troops were instigated to revolt, by the ignorant pride of being offended at foreign instructions.

When we reflect, that many of these wise regulations were in that short space of six months, which put a period to the reign of their author, we are affected by pity and horror.

Some of these innovations deserved public gratitude; others, the reproach of precipitation:—though a sovereign despot, this Prince excelled in acts of bounty, and of justice.—His enterprizes against Denmark were more natural and less pernicious than the war against Prussia, fostered by the personal hatred of Elizabeth, and her Minister. The private

life of Peter, it is true, was disfigured by the excesses of the table, which ultimately might have rendered him contemptible; but where is the King, or the individual, whose infirmities are not relieved by some good qualities? Does not equity hold the balance of good, and of bad qualities? If the virtues, and defects of the Emperor were weighed, who is there could justify his dethronement, and his death? Is the least equality visible between the discontents he produced, and his unfortunate exit? A warm friend, a good father, an indulgent husband, but too easy, too confident, and too open

to those traitors, upon whom his favours were lavished; at the end of six months he experienced a fate, which ten years, stained with crimes and with tyranny, could have scarcely justified.

His unchangeable security annihilates all those imputations, which have burthened his memory;—a conspiracy was secretly formed, of which he rejected the least suspicion—the loyal trembled for his safety—clandestine assemblies were directed by the partizans of the Empress, and their designs upon the Crown. The Prince George of Holstein, and

other clear-sighted men, perceived his danger—confidential dispatches daily aggravated the conduct of Peter, poisoned the public discourse, and prepared the way for a revolution:—the Emperor alone remained fearless—solicited by discoveries, he rejected them as calumnies. Amongst those who wished to awaken him from his lethargy, was the King of Prussia. That wise and penetrating Monarch has preserved an abridgement of a letter, and the Emperor's answer; and both cast a great light upon the true causes of this revolution.

"The friendship of Frederick the "Second, his esteem, as well as gra- "titude, his opinion of the excellent "qualities of the Third Peter, in- "duced him to write, and to reveal "these mysteries. He requested "that his coronation might take "place at Moscow, and that his "person might thereby be rendered "sacred, in the eye of the nation. "He mentioned the revolutions in "Russia, since the reign of Peter "the Great, but touched them light- "ly; and finished with conjuring "that the Emperor would take pro- "per precautions for his personal safety."

THIS

This letter made no impression on the Emperor; he answered it in these terms: "Touching the interest you express for my safety, I request you will rest contented. I am called the father of my soldiers—they prefer a male, to a female government. I walk alone constantly in Petersburg—if any mischief is meditated, it would have been effected long since—But I am a general benefactor—I repose myself on the protection of Heaven: trusting to that, I have nothing to fear."

NOTWITHSTANDING this answer, the

the King of Prussia continued to inform Peter the Third of his danger. Messieurs Goltz and Schewrin had orders to converse with him on this subject, at their audiences; but it was to no purpose that they told him, that while the customs of Russia prevailed, the Sovereign could not take too many precautions: at last the King told them, "My friends, say "no more upon that disagreeable "subject."

ASSUREDLY this was the language of candour, and it proves how averse the Emperor was to any of those bad designs, which were attributed to him,

him, to colour the fatal conspiracy against his freedom and his life. They knew but little of the human heart, and still less of an open character, which never disguised his thoughts, who do not find in the tranquillity of his conscience, the secret of his security. Had Peter designed to imprison his wife, and his successor, her son, he could have watched all the motions of their partizans; he would have listened to the suspicions of his faithful servants, the admonitions of his friend, the Prussian Monarch: the council he listened to, with such attention, would have produced explanation, and not that simple answer,

swer, "I am a general benefactor, "and therefore I have nothing to "fear."

It is remarkable, that the first design was, to adopt the before-mentioned project of the Chancellor Bestuchef, which was, to declare the young Duke to be Emperor, under the regency of his mother. This scheme was not a new plan of the Czarina's partizans; and the consideration of its forming the base of a new plot against the Emperor, shewed it had long been in contemplation, and was an artful contrivance: they could not prevent his succession,

sion, but they intended to dethrone him, by a continuation of the same machinations.

This system, however, had the objections of a minority; and if a regency would have been shaken upon the first popular discontent, and upon his majority, the government of the Empress would terminate—and who could answer that she might not in future experience the fate of her husband. It was, therefore, resolved to dethrone the father and the son, and to consummate their ambitious views, by placing this uncertain crown upon the head of the Empress.

Never was there a bolder project: but fortune favoured their audaciousness. Peter was on the wing for Holstein, and the conspirators chose the period of his absence to possess the capital. Had this succeeded, Russia would have had two Sovereigns, in Germany and in Petersburg, with all the convulsions attendant upon divided sway. While the Czar lived, Catherine could not expect a tranquil moment—but it seems, trivial circumstances accelerated the execution, aggravated the catastrophe, and secured success.

To his last day, even to his last hour,

hours, Peter preserved his magnanimous, fatal security and confidence; his Russian Guards were corrupted by Orlof and Rozamouski, Catherine was mistress of the capital, and his Officers were seduced by slanders against their Sovereign. Already had the conspirators impiously counteracted their fidelity, by swearing and binding themselves in the most solemn manner, to commit high treason; and the Archbishop of Novogorod, that fanatic incendiary, whom the clemency of Peter had pardoned, presided in the solemnization of this ceremony, under the auspices of the Empress. At length, the Emperor's

friends were arrested, and the people were deceived by artful reports, that the Prince had died by a fall from his horse, before Peter suspected the enterprize at Petersburg.

He was then at the Orienabaum. Spite of the baseness and servile infidelity of many Nobles, of military and civil Officers, he had still some resolute friends: the Chancellor Woronzof, the virtuous Mareschal Munich, and his faithful Holstein troops. Affairs were not yet desperate. The intrepid Munich counciled Peter to march directly to Petersburg, at the head of his German

troops. "I shall precede you," said the generous veteran, "and my dead "body shall be a rampart to your sa- "cred person." Possibly such a resolution would have crushed the conspirators: the same servile spirit which had prostrated the nobles, the people, and the soldiery, would have reduced them to their lawful Sovereign, marching to vindicate his crown with his sword, and with the abilities of Munich.

But, alas! irresolution superseded courage; not that Peter wanted spirit, but he was distracted by discordant councils: in his train were emis-

saries

saries of the Empress, bathing the hands of this Prince with deceitful tears, affecting to represent the dangers he incurred, inviting him to the Empress, and deprecating resistance. Thus perfidy accomplished, what treachery had commenced;—and thus Peter, surrounded by traitors, was entangled in their snares, and a prey to uncertainty, when every moment was precious, and called for decision.

Europe and posterity will never forget the cruel fate of this Monarch, in the flower of his age—dragged into captivity, and expiring

in the ferocious hands of his wife and his own confidants. The humane compassionated his misfortunes; and none were insensible of his sufferings, save only those, from whom he had a claim to succour and to consolation.

On the contrary, outrages of every kind were offered to him: by delivering himself up voluntarily to her, who, during fourteen years, had the honour to be the partner of his bed, it seemed he was protected by all that was most sacred amongst men. His person, committed to the discretion of the Empress, became a depo-

deposit, upon which it was no longer permitted to form attacks—it neither belonged to his enemies, by the rights of war, nor by that of the laws; and from the moment Peter had surrendered, without compulsion, every abode of Catherine should have been an inviolable asylum for him. Alas! this illusion, by which he had been dazzled, was of a short duration.

He had been defamed by a manifesto of June the 28th;—hardly arrived at Peterhof, he became a prisoner, and felt the humiliation of being secretly visited by Count Pa-

min, that frivolous and versatile Minister, loaded with praises by hireling gazetteers—that Panin who had dared to dictate to his master, and benefactor, to a Sovereign, who was a prisoner, an act of abdication, and of dishonour; an act conceived in the most humiliating expressions—that Panin, in fine, who forced the descendant of Peter the First, to take his oath, in the presence of the Almighty, to renounce his Crown, to sign with his own hand, such a monument of audaciousness and infamy.

NOTWITHSTANDING this abdication,

tion, which served as a new title for preserving his life and liberty, the Emperor, that very night, was confined in the Castle of Robscha.—— Whilst her husband entered this tomb, the Empress surprised Petersburg with the noise and bustle of a triumphal entry.

But this pageant was not sufficient to stifle the sensibility of the multitude; disloyalty, in a vast number of them, was rapidly succeeded by remorse and by compassion. The people, who are always good, when left to their natural impulse, were shocked at hearing that their Sove-

reign had just passed from a Throne, into the horrors of an eternal prison. The soldiery manifested their emotions, every one was affected by the remembrance of Peter's virtues, and his faults were forgotten; as the displeasure hourly increased, the Empress was threatened with a frightful reverse..... But let us draw a veil over this melancholy scene, which put an end to his inquietudes; let us not repeat, that the seventh day of his captivity, Peter the Third was no more; that he contended for his unhappy life, with the ferocious Courtiers who penetrated into the fortress; that the screams of his con-

convulsive agonies were heard; that two days after, some strangers saw the walls stained with the Emperor's blood; and that one of the principal performers in this tragedy, had been pursued for years, by the idea of his expiring Sovereign, and exhibited a shocking spectacle in Petersburg, of remorse and of insanity.

At the first news of this catastrophe, Europe, though habituated to the bloody revolutions, which, for forty years, gave masters to Russia, shewed less surprise than compassion: for, public opinion was favourable to the victim. In order to colour the sacrifice,

crifice; fictitious reports were circulated; sinister projects were imputed to Peter the Third, against which, the Empress should have guarded herself;—"For," according to the remark of a celebrated writer, "nothing is so easy as to suppose "crimes in those, who are already "pursued by the hatred of a victorious party."

This is not the time to anticipate the revelations of history; but there is no impropriety in presenting before-hand the justice of them, by observing how ridiculous those pretences were, with which the persecutors

cutors of Peter the Third, amused the credulity of the people.

In the manifesto of June the 28th, this Prince is accused *of having shaken the foundations of the Greek church, of the established religion; and of having given room to apprehend that another would be introduced in its stead.* The most frantic fanaticism could only have dictated such a charge. Peter had been tolerant; he authorised a Lutheran Chapel at Orienabaum, for the use of his German troops: it cannot be pretended, that he should have compelled his soldiers, from Holstein, to follow, like himself,

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the rites and liturgy of the Greek Church. His toleration was the consequence of the progress of reason, of the example of all the wise Princes of his time. When Joseph the Second had granted the Protestant congregations in his dominions, the liberty of worship, none of his relations thought of contending with him for the Empire, under pretence that he shook the prevailing faith. This faith has no affinity with secularizing monasteries, or diminishing that number of images, which the vulgar had worshipped. These reformations belong to religious discipline, and are not attempts against

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the dogmas of the established religion. Is it for the interest of the God of Peace and Justice, to dethrone, to imprison, to put to death, the legitimate Chief of the State? In fine, was it consistent for the tolerant Catherine, to render herself the interpreter, the avenger of some zealots' resentment, to sacrifice the duties of affinity and of the Throne, to popular fanaticism?

The second grievance alledged in the manifesto, is not less ludicrous. It is pretended that the glory of Russia has been, as it were, *trampled upon by the peace lately concluded with*

its

its greatest enemy. Neither the Russian government, nor the nation, had the least reason to look upon the King of Prussia as their greatest enemy; the two powers had no grounds of dispute. Elizabeth's personal rancour, and the artifices of a perverse Minister, who had been justly punished, had occasioned the war;—there would have been glory in putting an end to it, rather than in persisting in spilling human blood, and wasting the treasures of the State, when her interests were not concerned. Had not this truth been almost self-evident, Catherine herself would not have made it clear, by her subsequent

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conduct to this Prince, who had been rashly called the greatest enemy to *Russia*.

It is plain then, that these reproaches are only evasions contrived by those, who are sorry for having no legitimate excuse. No Sovereign could be, for four and twenty hours, sure of his crown, if it depended on accusations of that kind. It is true, that to these frivolous allegations, more serious ones were added by artful rumours, particularly of a plot formed by the Emperor, against Catherine's liberty, and that of her son. But had this, and other simi-

lar

lar designs existed, why were they not exposed in this accusatory manifesto? Why were not these legitimate complaints given, as a plea to justify such violent measures? Why has recourse been had to the danger of orthodoxy, to the peace with Prussia? Why have the dangers of religion and the peace with Prussia been started, when it was possible to gain the good opinions of the people, by disclosing a conspiracy both against the Partner of the Throne and his Successor? If, at the moment of fixing the public opinion, these chimerical attempts had been unnoticed, is it not probable, that they

were

were contrived afterwards, in order to silence the clamours of the Public?

Besides, many notorious facts destroy these assertions, of which no admissible proof has ever been produced. It is known, that at the time of setting out for Holstein, Peter had named the Empress Regent during his absence. Who can believe, that he thus trusted the government of his capital, the administration of his empire, to a Princess whom he intended to arrest? It would be an idle task, to expatiate upon these irreconcileable ideas.

But in the fortress of Schlusselbourg, Peter, as it was reported, had an apartment constructed seemingly for an illustrious person, who was reported to be the Empress. The fact is certain, that an apartment was constructed, but the inference is erroneous. There is an anecdote which unravels this mysterious incident. The learned and accurate Busching, upon his return from Russia, had published this secret; he had been apprized of it by General Korff, who had accompanied Peter III. to Schlusselbourg; particular information have confirmed the truth, and discovered

covered some circumstances of this story, which we shall here transcribe.

In March, 1762, Peter III. accompanied by General Korff, and Mr. Goudewitz, repaired, incognito, to Schlusselbourg, where Elizabeth, in 1756, had caused the unfortunate Prince Iwan to be transferred, who had a right to the Throne, by the Empress Ann, Duchess of Courland, his Aunt.

This Prince was proclaimed Emperor in 1740, when in his cradle; he was deposed by Elizabeth in 1741, and he was imprisoned and assassinated in

1764. Peter was affected at seeing the manner in which this prisoner was treated: an arched room, twenty feet square, formed his habitation; a truckle bed, with a table and a few chairs, were all his furniture; a faint light pervaded this sorrowful dwelling; by degrees, the Prince was weaned of most of the comforts bestowed upon him before the former years of his captivity. In his conversation with the Emperor, he inveighed against the Grand Duke and his consort, styling them the Usurpers of his Crown. "I shall regain "it," added he, "and will have them "both beheaded." Peter, less affected

fected by this discourse, than the deplorable condition of the Prince, whose senses were affected, and bore in every respect a stamp of imbecility, assured him that the Grand Duke did not bear him any ill will, and would be much concerned at his situation, if he were apprized of it. "I approach his person very often," added he, "and if you wish for an "alleviation of your imprisonment, "I promise to obtain it for you." The Prince answered, with a sigh, that "one day he had been permitted "to come down into the inner court "of the fortress, he had looked at "the sky, and breathed a pure air;

"It is," added he, "the most gra-
"tifying pleasure I have ever en-
"joyed; and if the Grand Duke be
"not an enemy to me, tell him, I
"pray you, that I beg he would
"grant it to me very often." Peter could not help melting into tears, and from that moment resolved to set Iwan at liberty: such was likewise the sentiment of Prince George of Holstein, the Emperor's Uncle; but the insanity of the prisoner having been proved, Peter determined to have a convenient house built in the fortress for him, with a terrace, that he might take a walk every day. While that building was construct-

ing, Iwan was transferred to Kexholm, at the other extremity of the Lake Ladoga. Three weeks after, the Emperor was dethroned; and, as if this were a consequence of the fear with which the new building at Schlusselbourg had inspired his enemies, he perished a victim of his humane and generous sentiments.

IWAN survived him only two years: a new mysterious tragedy put an end, on the 5th of July, 1764, to the alarms which this Prince, though fettered, had created. It is well known that he had been assassinated by his own guards; and that after

such a crime, the only blood spilt upon a scaffold at Petersburg, was that of Lieutenant-General Mirovitch, who had been arraigned for attempting to defend the life of a Grand-Nephew to Peter the Great.

Such were the auspices under which the new Empress began to reign—the circumstances of her elevation determined her eagerness for glory. She was conscious she should keep the Russians constantly employed, fix their attention upon enterprizes and conquests, and foreign sway, to strengthen her power at home.

It has been mentioned, that the deposition of Peter, and the Empress's manifesto, were solely founded upon his plans and connections with Prussia; but these, truly patriotic plans, though previously condemned by her, have all been executed by Catherine II. and it is to them this Princess is indebted for the most solid part of her glory. On the other side, upon the Emperor's ashes, was laid the foundation of a close connection with the King of Prussia, who before had been declared the natural enemy of Russia.

UNCERTAIN of the measures Frederick

derick the Great would salute, being afraid lest he should employ against herself the corps that under Mr. de Czernichef had joined the Prussians, she hastily recalled her troops: they had remained inactive, and as soon as the Empress had secured her authority, she adopted Peter the Third's policy, conciliated Prussia, and soon attached herself to that country, by a defensive alliance.

PETER had done so through principle; and Catherine did it, in order to prepare enterprizes conformable to her genius and situation, to the ambition of the minions who surrounded

rounded her person. Having formed the plan of imposing her laws upon her neighbours, it was important for her to keep fair with the powers that could assist them. Denmark was almost gained over; Sweden was governed by a faction, corrupted by Russia; Poland was deprived of the most solemn act of sovereignty, that of electing a King; in fine, Courland did no longer exist, but to be a pray to the caprice of the Councils of Petersburg.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

THE USURPATION OF THE DUCHY OF COURLAND.

THE Duchy of Courland and Semi-Gallia, abounding in corn, rich from its naval stores, containing fifteen hundred thousand inhabitants, governed by warlike nobility, possessing on the Baltic two advantageous ports, forms, by its situation, an important barrier between the new dominions of the Russian empire, Prussia, and Poland. Since the Swedes have lost Livonia, Courland, in time

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of war, becomes necessary to supply them with provisions. In that respect, the neighbourhood of Petersburg must be very dangerous to Courland, which is thereby rendered exceedingly useful to Russia, in cases of necessity. It has been, for these fifty years, treated like a Moscovite province; but the affronts have been multiplied, and the yoke made heavier in the reign of Catherine II.

When she seized upon the reigns of government, the Prince Charles of Saxony, the second son of Augustus III. possessed Courland. He had in his favour the free choice of

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the States, the free homage of the Nobility, the solemn investiture of the King, and the Republic of Poo land, of which Courland is a fief. Having been installed in 1759, and acknowledged by all the powers, he united every right of lawful possession. This possession did not prevent the Empress of Russia, in 1762, from affixing her seal upon the property of the domain of Courland, and exercising a positive act of sovereignty. She wanted a Duke of her own creation, and devoted to her interests. To whom did she give the preference? To Ernest John Biron, who had been declared guilty of high treason

treason by Elizabeth, and banished to Siberia, who was dead in law, and so sentenced by a decree of the States of Courland. Though he had been recalled, it is true, since Elizabeth's death, his degradation did no longer permit her to promote him again to an elective sovereignty, which, even in its origin, had never been lawful; for, Biren had evaded the personal homage he owed the republic of Poland, and the neglect of which made his investiture void.

If, however, Biren's pretensions were less warrantable, there existed only one competent judge of it, the Sovereign.

Sovereign. It belonged to Poland to decide upon her vassal's reclamation. Augustus III was so moderate as to refer this examination to the Empress's decision.

Instead of using negociations, the Empress forced the inclination of the inhabitants of Courland from the arbitration of their legitimate Sovereign from Poland, the Lord Paramount of this fief. At first, emissaries attempted to corrupt the loyalty of the nobles, and to stir them up against the Duke Charles. Those expedients having failed, strange outrages were tried—the Duke lived

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at Mittau; he was expelled from that place. The most attrocious indignities preceded such a violation of the right of nations, of the right of Sovereigns, of respect, and decency. M. de Simolin, a native of Courland, and then Minister of the Russian cabinet, and of its tyranny at Mittau, formed the plan of famishing the Prince Charles, and he put it into execution: he began with seizing and sequestering the revenues of the demesnes; afterwards, the archives were carried away; at length, Russain guards closed the magazines of wood, of straw, and of oats; the brewhouse, cellars, storehouses, foun-

rains, and even the poultry yard of his Royal Highness. This execution of a new kind, was followed by acts equally outrageous :--Biren was then introduced into Mittau, and installed by M. de Simolin's soldiers. That agent of the Czarina treated the magistrates of Mittau, the States, the King of Poland's deputies, like his servants :--but the Prince Charles persisted to remain in Courland; Count Brown, Governor of Livonia, sent him orders that he should *leave the country, for, such was the Empress's pleasure*. This haughty command was effected, in spite of the lawful Sovereign still resisting to the last;

last; and this was treated, in his own dominions, in the presence of an independent nation, a Prince, the son and vassal to the King of Poland, an Ally of Russia.

Of that enchroachment upon the liberties of Courland, and the rights of Poland, the compleat reduction of the Duchy was the consequence. Ten Thousand Russians, after forcing them to receive a King elected at Petersburg, compelled them to secure to Ernest John Biren's son the investiture of Courland. Peter, the new Duke, was permitted to preserve his dignity, but on condition that he

should submit to the orders, and yield to the Extortions of the Empress's minions :—the first employments of Courland were conferred upon their creatures, and all claims were silenced ; those were dismissed, who could not be seduced ; there were seduced, who, through an apparent good character, were likely to form an opposition. Among the latter, was the Chamberlain Howen, distinguished for his capacity and courage : having defended at Warsaw, the rights of his native country against the Russian despotism, he was seized, carried off, and sent to Siberia ; and he was under the necessity of

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choosing either the sacrifice of his patriotism, or that of his liberty: but he stooped to wear the common chain, governed Courland, in the name of the Empress, and was promoted to the dignity of Bourgrave. Marshal Klopman, his predecessor in authority, had adopted the same condescension. Under the influence of those tools of the Empress, the Duke's authority has been, in fact, annihilated — the suffrages of the States have been bought publicly — vexations of every kind, alienations, political robberies, have been legalized. At the voice of the Russian Minister at Mittau, Courland nar-

rowed her limits, suffered her own subjects, reclaimed as Russians, to be carried away, and subjected her policy to the rescripts of the Empress's councils. More than once, the Duke, reduced to the mere title of his principality, saw himself forced to buy its preservation. Every murmur he risked, was answered by a menace; *and the menace was* immediately followed by an extortion. At last, fatigued with so expensive a tutelage, he sought for protectors less exacting—The Empress had treated him like a rebel. Prudence had suggested to him an escape; he took refuge at Berlin; secured

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part of his treasure there, and meditated a plan of abdication.

At the first indication of such a design, which was in favour of one of the Princes of Virtemberg, engaged in the service of Prussia, as it was imagined, the Empress addressed a strong admonition to the States of Courland, and threatened them with her indignation, if they presumed to concur in this opinion. Thus, after having despoiled the reigning Duke of his authority, she insisted he should keep the shadow of it—she forbade Courland to use her sovereign right of choosing a

successor to the Duchy. Thus Russia declared to all Europe, that she had no respect, no regard due by Sovereigns to their mutual independence; that for her sake, all those rights should be effaced which are the basis of society; that she laid an undeniable claim to the dictatorship over such States as were placed by Providence in her neighbourhood.

COURLAND, insensible from fear or corruption, had suffered this outrage—the Duke returned to Mittau—the crisis was favourable to men, roused by a just sense of public injury—but the Court of Berlin still per-

perceives the effect of Russian influence in Courland, which extends to the frontiers of Poland; the true interest of this last country would have aided her designs, if she had had power to aid her with success.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

AFFAIRS OF POLAND—NOMINATION OF STANISLAUS THE THIRD BY RUSSIA.

THE Empress had hardly dethroned one Sovereign, before she undertook to create another in Poland. At the death of Augustus the Third, probably the Court of Petersburg did not comprehend all the schemes at first view, which were necessary to carry this plan into execution, but which were produced and disclosed by

by degrees. The present policy proceeded no farther than to reduce Sweden to inactivity, and thereby to exercise a decisive influence, to form and to excite factions one against the other, and to facilitate that work of Count Panin, the northern league, which might insure to Russia, a supremacy over all the adjoining countries.

The concurrence of Prussia was necessary, for the completion of this plan; it was the interest of that King to detach Russia from Vienna—he was adverse to the House of Saxony, and to their pretensions to Poland.

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Since the peace, he had skilfully engaged the Empress and Count Panin in his interests, and had negotiated a treaty at Petersburg. Catherine, determined to have the ascendant in Poland, formed an alliance with Prussia, to counterbalance the Saxon, Austrian, and French opposition. In January, 1764, the two Courts signed a defensive alliance. Frederick himself informs us, that they engaged to prevent the Crown becoming hereditary in Poland; to name a Piast or Protector, namely Stanislaus Poniatouski, Stolnick or Governor of Lithuania, to protect the Dissidents,

dents, or in juster terms, to arm them against the Commonwealth.

THE Court of Petersburg was the party principally interested in this plan, to whom the advantage would belong—Prussia had only a collateral interest, namely, that of favouring the design of her Ally.

THE force and energy of the best historian, cannot describe the execution and the horrible consequences of this enterprize; they are the disgrace of this century—the most unprincipled politician could hardly premeditate a system of violence and op-

oppression similar to that under which Poland has groaned for ten successive years.

WAVING the crimination of partizans, events of public notoriety afford the most ample testimony.

To exclude all foreign candidates from an elective sovereignty, was a glaring violation of the constitution of an independent country, which could alone claim the disposition of its Crown; but the sole fiat of Russia superseded every other consideration, and a foreign Prince, who might have force or ability to defend

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the Republic, could not be convenient for the designs of Russia.

A Sovereign who should be her nominee, and not the choice of his countrymen, was necessary. A Radzivil, a Potocki—any Noble possessed of reputation, of independence, would not have become a Royal Pageant, dependent upon a Foreign Prince.

The King which she wanted, was one of a mild and flexible character; insulated, unconnected, without any relation or alliance with any other Power in Europe—the legality of whose

whose election should render him obnoxious to the people, to a host of enemies, and consequently forced to rely upon that power and protection, to which he had owed his elevation.

ALL these qualifications appeared in the character of Stanislaus the Third—a good disposition, improved by education, those amiable qualities which ingratiate individuals, and gain general regard and esteem. His poverty, his youth, his connections with Russia, the marked favour of the Empress, would have prevented his succession to this painful pre-

eminence.

eminence. This election could never be due to free suffrages; but to a violation of national privileges.—This Prince, it is presumed, hoped to regain public affection by time; but Russian policy created a lasting alienation.

Upon the convention of the Diet, ten thousand Russians entered Warsaw, while the Prussians menaced the frontiers of the Republic. The districts which chose members, were filled by soldiers, who compelled the nomination of Russian partizans—the capital was soon surrounded by Cossacks, who invested the Diet—

their chamber was attacked—one of their members was attacked, sword in hand, and arrested, in this sanctuary of sovereign power, in the presence of the President or Marechal of the Diet, who left the assembly with the emblem of his office, accompanied by many illustrious senators, and other patriotic members, protesting against these violations of the laws of nations, and the liberty of Poland. Retiring into the provinces, they were followed by the Russians, who seized some who resisted, proscribed others, and declared Prince Radzivil an enemy to his country. These despotic proceedings

ceedings were followed by breaches and innovations in the constitution. The four regiments of guards, under the King's authority, united with the Russian troops to interrupt the freedom of election—this tumultuous assembly, influenced by fear, elected and crowned Stanislaus. Exile or submission was the lot of his opponents, while Russia meditated new outrages.

It cannot be denied, that in many antecedent interregnums, recommendations, power, the violence of party, had favoured one or the other of the candidates; but a military force, and

foreign troops, had never, before this, created a King in a free country, in the midst of his equals—of the lawful electors—of a nation thus influenced in her choice; nor could Voltaire, or other flatterers, justify this proceeding by precedents. All former elections had been as peaceable as could be supposed, where numerous, independent, and sanguine partizans were convened—transitory tumults are not civil wars. Thus, Henry of Valois, Ladislas the Fourth, Casimir, and Sobieski, had been elected. In divisions, or in double returns, or contested elections, as in the cases of Stephen Battori, Sigismond

mond the Third, the Emperor Maximilian, a Polonese party had given the law—public liberty was not undermined, and troops never entered the district of election; no competitor had forced a nomination by his armies, though they might have afterwards supported his election.—Charles the Twelfth had, it is true, dethroned a King of Poland by war; but Augustus had provoked the indignation of the Alexander of the North. The active partizan of the Czar lost his Crown by the fortune of that war, in which his imprudence had engaged the Republic.

RUSSIA was the first to give the example of a forced, and of a warlike, military election: she did not confine herself to countenance a free choice, but she influenced the preliminary steps, and prefaced her proceedings by forcing those places, which chose members, to return her partizans—these preparatory scenes were viewed in their true light by many foreign Ministers, representatives of ancient Allies, who retired from a country which they could no longer consider as free under a military protectorate.

SECTARIES and Dissenters, a numerous body, were excluded, under the

the Saxon Kings, from places of trust and employments in the State; but the tolerating spirit of the Republic, the mildest perhaps in Europe, gave them more freedom than in any other country, even in those where philosophy is most predominant. When Russia had excited their discontent, they had two hundred churches, beside places of private worship;—they possessed governments, regiments, and military rank; most of the subalterns were Nonconformists; their toleration was greater than that of the Dissenters in England, in Holland, in France, and even Russia herself. Political dig-

nities, it is true, were reserved to the established religion; but every other description of civil liberty was theirs—the Republic was ever ready to redress their particular and accidental grievances.

Of grievances, of which few had complained, Russia formed the materials of discontent. The Staroste, and the General Grabouski, two brothers, who were Dissenters, were bribed, and prevailed upon to display their grievances: they claimed the rights of the treaties of Velau and Oliva, where Russia was not concerned as a contracting, or as an ac-

ceeding party; but she arrogated the right of a guarantee; while Sweden, to whom this right really belonged, was silent. The treaty of Moscow was falsely quoted, no stipulations having been created thereby in favour of the Dissenters. At last, the Diet in 1766, heard their complaints and redressed them, and restored such rights as justice, law, and reasonable toleration, allowed; but rejected such as the common order established in all countries had forbidden; the legal barriers were left between the established religion and the tolerated sects, and excluded

cluded the sectaries from all political dignities.

Few States are governed by other regulations; of all other Princes, the Empress was the least qualified to demand their repeal: in her States Dissenters never entered into her councils, or administration, or had ever mounted the throne. Had the Third Peter effected such an innovation, the apologists of the Empress, the writers of her manifestos, would have proclaimed the danger of the church and of orthodoxy, as they did that of the pecuniary interests of the Monks.—This philosophical toleration,

toleration, for which they inflamed Poland, did not prevent the schismatic Greeks, under Russian influence, to massacre a hundred thousand men, of a different persuasion, for which no Russian officer was questioned. Many Greeks and Latins, who were pillaged of their all, were seen in the Polish provinces, without the least effort of Russia to redress their grievances.

These remarks would hardly have taken place, had it not been for the number of violences in Poland, under the colour of toleration; but the plan was formed to oppress the Republic,

public, to protect a faction, and to maintain a standing Russian army. The policy of the Court extended its baneful influence still farther; the equal rights of the Dissenters once established, a Dissenter might occupy the throne, under the auspices of Russia and of her troops, which could level all difficulties. The Greek religion was interested in the designs against the Republic, and their influence, in the eastern and southern provinces, secured.

THE moderate resolutions of the Diet, in 1766, were considered as acts of rebellion at Petersburg.

From

From that moment the Prince Repnin, the Ambassador at Warsaw, became Viceroy of the Republic; the Dissenters were armed, and invoked public protection, while, united with the Russian troops, they betrayed the country.

But the design of defending them openly, with the undecided declarations of the King of Prussia, were not sufficient for the rapid execution of their designs. The King of Poland murmured at the rigorous tutelage of himself, his family, and his party. To give some energy to the national assemblies, they had abolished

lished the Liberum Veto,* and some other wise regulations, which gave umbrage to Russia.

In consequence of this, the Russian dictator under the modest name of an Ambassador, opposed artfully to the King, the nominee of the Empress, the members who had been exiled for their opposition to his election. Various intrigues succeeded in 1765; and in 1767, conciliations were proposed; and it was with

* A curious account of this power, which resembled the tribunitial power in the Roman State, is to be found in Mr. Cox's Northern Tour.

with the olive branch in his hand, that Prince Repnin prepared a poison for the Commonwealth.

By artful intrigues among the most discontented of the citizens, the Russian Ambassador formed the association at Radom, where the malecontents assembled in 1767, when the Catholics and some Nobles were gained by promises of satisfying their grievances; and it is an authenticated fact, that he proceeded so far as to assure some of them, that the King should be dethroned.

The Prince Radzivil, who had been

been exiled as the most active opponent of Russia, became the pillar of this new confederacy; he was named President of the Association; but, under pretence of an escort, he became, in fact, a prisoner of State.

The Confederacy itself, surrounded by Russian troops, experienced the same fate—at this period, he enjoined the convention of a Diet at Warsaw, for the redress of their grievances;—and mixing derision with violence, he procured an embassy to the Empress, to thank her for her maternal care. The Confe-

derates

derates perceived in vain the nets in which they were entangled.

THIS memorable Diet opened in 1767; the Russian troops had dictated the choice of many of their members; the Grand Cup-Bearer of the Crown had been imprisoned at Pologna, and the Republic appeared like a conquered State. One of the members, who had courage to exclaim against their proceedings, was seized in the street; the Poles, so formidable hitherto to Russia, were besieged by their soldiery in their own senate house, and the le-

gislators were invited to sanction the orders of a Russian Plenipotentiary.

AMONG these decrees of Prince Repnin, one was, to admit the Schismatic Greeks and Dissenters into political dignities, which would annihilate the independence of Poland, and convert it into a Russian province.

SOLTYK, Bishop of Cracovie, a man worthy of ancient Rome, having animated the courage of the Diet, and spoken loudly against these proceedings, was seized in his bed;—while the Bishp of Kiovie, and the Count

Count of Cracovie, Rewuski, and his son, underwent the same fate, and were banished to Siberia. Warsaw was treated like a city taken by asssault.—Thus were all Prince Repnin's decrees past, and thus did he pacify the Republic.

"So many acts of sovereignty," says the King of Prussia, "exercised "in the dominions of the Republic, "by a foreign power, at length af-"fected the public mind;" some Poles, whom despair had assembled in the Ukrain, gave the signal; the confederation of Bar was formed, which daily increased, and opposed

the tyranny of Russia. Unhappily this increasing resistance was but faintly, if at all, supported by any foreign Court, which enabled the Russians to complete their work.—For some time successes were balanced; but the Confederates being left to themselves, and fickle and unsteady in their plans and operations, were of no other use than to increase the barbarity of the Russian generals. One of them, Colonel Drewitz, ordered his prisoners hands to be cut off, before they were executed. Monasteries, churches, neither age nor sex were spared; no asylum was inviolate; the estates and properties

of

of the Confederates, and of many others in Poland, were plundered, without distinction of ranks, or the rules of war in civilized countries; many prisoners of rank were exiled, and perished for want in the deserts of Siberia.

In the midst of these horrors, the Ottoman Porte had declared she would resist encroachments upon her territory, and assist an old and useful Ally, and prevent the torrent which inundated Poland, from overflowing her possessions.

CHAP. V.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE RUSSIAN COURT IN DENMARK.

THIS rupture occupied not only Russia, but the Courts of Berlin and Vienna. The Empress had condemned the Northern Courts to inactivity; in the name of the Senate, she governed Sweden; Denmark was influenced by her Ambassadors.

SHE had reason to fear that the latter would avail herself of this crisis,

crisis, to form alliances to support her ancient, undecided claim to the Duchy of Sleswick. Frederick the Fifth was still living. The Empress sent her privy counsellor Saldern to the Danish Court, whose manners and whose haughtiness were analogous to the character of his country.

He displayed at Copenhagen the same haughtiness which even the King of Prussia had complained of at Berlin. The King of Denmark soon found that a Russian influence prevailed in the choice of his ministers and generals, and he concluded

his mission by the proposition of an amicable arrangement of an exchange for the Duchy of Sleswick.

FREDERICK the Fifth died before this treaty was concluded: Saldern afterwards appeared as a tutor to the new king; he prevailed upon him to travel, against the opinion of his ministers, and the wishes of the nation. Saldern, and Philosophoff, his subsequent colleague, became the arbiters and directors of the councils of Denmark; of the schemes, the political, and even private affairs of the Danish Monarch. Their dictatorship was absolute

solute and uncontrouled, and consequently highly unpopular. In 1767, they prevailed with the King to sign the provisional treaty for the Duchy of Sleswick, and their power might have been as durable as it was considerable, had it not been suddenly limited by that revolution which put a period to the administration of Rantzaw and Struensee.

SEEING Russia weakened by the Turkish war, obliged to keep thirty thousand men in pay to guard Poland; her finances exhausted, and apprehensive of internal commotions, Struensee attempted to conciliate

ciliate Denmark with Sweden, the affairs of which latter he would no longer embroil: and to found in the North a political balance against the ambition of Russia; but the destiny of this country got the better. The unfortunate Struensee's schemes perished along with him, and Denmark felt the yoke once more; she joined again the train of Russia, and made a compact which forced her to interfere in all the disputes of that power, that is to say, to defend her whenever her attempts upon the liberty of the North should be resisted. From Poland, from the Porte, the Empress had nothing to dread,

dread, but negotiations, or rather intrigues; and no real resistance from a power of the first order, or of the Court of Vienna. But the Porte did not look with an indifferent eye upon the ascendancy of Russia. The rapid progress of her schemes, and of her arms, alarmed the Divan, and with much more reason, than the neighbouring powers. The House of Austria felt the danger of seeing near her frontiers a power accustomed to respect no boundaries. The Ottoman Porte being once crushed, Poland subdued, and the Danube possessed by the Russians, this storm must needs envelope Hungary

gary and the bordering provinces. Even the King of Prussia, though an Ally to Russia, was apprehensive lest, in process of time, she would attempt to give her laws to himself, as well as to Poland: at this period of common danger, he conciliated the Court of Vienna: a fact worthy of the greatest attention, the certainty of which is established by Frederick the Second himself, and from which, in this present juncture, the North, and all Germany, may derive much light. The greatest genius which ever sat upon a throne, and Prince Kaunitz, one of the most penetrating statesmen, saw

the

the necessity of putting an end to the ambitious schemes of Russia, which, however, she resumed, and had almost accomplished without interruption.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

THE PARTITION OF POLAND.

THE dismemberment of Poland was the result of this conflict, of interests and negotiations. All the blame must fall upon that power, whose ambition, kindling that of her neighbours, forced them, upon pain of a general war, to subscribe to that injustice, the disgrace of our age—To subscribe, we say, for, not only the pretensions and violences of the Court of Petersburg,

did

did no longer allow proper means for their termination; but the Empress herself was the first who justified this scandalous partition.—In that respect, opinion has long varied; but Frederick the Second has thrown a ray of light upon it, in that immortal work, which may be considered as his last testament, wherein he has deposited a recital of his faults with so much candour, and of his exploits with so much modesty.

"The Empress of Russia," says this great man, "being irritated "that any other troops than her "own

" own should give law to Poland,
" said to the Prince Henry, that if
" the Court of Vienna intended to
" dismember Poland, other neigh-
" bouring powers had a right to do
" the same. . . . . Count Solms,
" the Prussian Envoy, was charged
" to discover whether there was any
" solid meaning in these expres-
" sions which the Empress had drop-
" ped; or if they had been uttered
" in a moment of humour and tran-
" sitory passion. Count Panin was
" rather

* The King of Prussia here alludes to the sequestration of the county of Zips by some Austrian troops.

"rather averse to that dismember-
"ment, but the Empress entertained
"the flattering idea of extending,
"without danger, the limits of her
"dominions. Her minions and
"some of her ministers supported
"her opinions. This resolution was
"presented to the King of Prussia,
"as an expedient contrived to in-
"demnify him for the subsidies he
"had paid to Russia."

THIS Leonine convention met, however, with great difficulties from the Russians; they would not relinquish their claim to Moldavia, or Walachia, and the Court of Vienna,

never would have agreed to that usurpation.—The King of Prussia risqued all the danger, the Empress had all the advantages of this partition. The Czarina's ministers wore out the time in subtlety and procrastination, in order to absorb the whole profit of this enterprize: at length the firmness of two of the contracting Courts checked her rapacity, and in February, 1772, the treaty was concluded, in a less iniquitous proportion of joint injustice.

We shall not dwell upon this scandalous period of our history, or

the infringement of social rights—the contempt of all remonstrances—the dreadful menaces—the outrages of every kind—by the help of which, the ratification of this usurpation was extorted from the Diet of Poland.—The Russian Ambassador acted the principal part in that scene: and he alone conducted the plan. The degree of arrogance in those diplomatic oppressors may be easily conceived, after, by a letter from Mr. Saldern, to Count Oginski, Grand-General of Lithuania, the 21st of June, 1771, the Russian Envoy wrote to this magnat, one of the first personages in Poland, "The

" Ambassador repeats to you the
" orders of his Sovereign, that you
" should repair to Warsaw, if ever
" you should wish to deserve her
" protection: should you neglect
" this intimation, you will feel the
" consequences;—I need not have
" recourse to threats."

DURING these unprecedented violences, some Russian Emissaries, and some hireling gazetteers, complimental apologists, and venal writers, flatterers who were reciprocally flattered, represented the Poles as a troop of fanaticks, and a gang of rebels. The Empress's manifestos

festos themselves were replete with such epithets—In one of her letters to Voltaire, she calls those confederates whom her generals had plundered, massacred, or exiled to Siberia, the Mutineers of Poland. Voltaire, delighted with those philosophical conquests, invented a new language of adulation; he styled Catherine the Second, the Northern Star, and he became the high priest of her temple; a hundred pensioned authors repeated this fulsome adulation in Germany, and in Paris.

The Republic, whose frontiers were destroyed, her demesnes lost,

her citizens slain or proscribed, had no other expectation left, but to see a seal put to the annihilation of her independence. She was compelled to refer the examination of her conqueror's projects to a delegation, where a venal and corrupt man presided, whose peculation was discovered by the Diet, when she had recovered her liberty. Two distinct acts were carried by the contracting powers; the first, to sanction the dismemberment; the second, to fix the form of her government. Notwithsanding her melancholy situation, and the peremptory orders sent to the Diet, only fifty-five Nuncios,

cios, against fifty-four, assented to the partition; nearly one half of the representatives of the equestrian order were absent or removed. As for the plan of a new constitution, it adopted all the defects of the old government of Poland, introduced pernicious novelties, and deprived the legiſlature of the power of correcting its own laws. By the most destructive of these new institutions, the interpretation of the laws, and almost the whole exercise of the executive power, were united in a permanent council, whose superintendance lasted near two years. This council, thus constituted, and con-

stantly assembled, necessarily predominated over the general council, which met only six weeks in a twelvemonth.

Such an organization of the government necessarily facilitated foreign influence; for, it was much easier to corrupt a body which consisted of few members, than such an assembly as the Diet. Russia deemed this species of constitution to be subservient to her designs and interests, she proposed and supported it with her whole strength; while the Republick, for different reasons,

reasons, gave it a strenuous opposition.

The King himself, supported by a majority of the Diet, rejected those insidious decrees, which were artfully called reformations. A whole year of intrigues, of bribery, and of threats and menaces, was necessary to surmount those difficulties, and to overcome this last resistance.

These measures were revived in the following year, and took place in 1776. When they were proposed to the Diet, in order to complete

and

and ratify this revolution, in the beginning of that year, Stanislaus Potocki, the Nuncio, or representative of Lublin, speaking before this regenerated assembly, which professed an intention to restore Poland to her rank amongst the powers of Europe, thus described that Diet in 1776: "This Diet," said he, "violated the most sa-
"cred national rights; every free
"and independent Pole saw himself
"expelled from that place, which
"should have been regarded as the
"sanctuary of liberty—the senate
"house was surrounded by soldiers,
"and access was denied to every
"virtuous,

"virtuous, patriotic, and public-spirited member of the Diet."

The act of the 15th of March, 1775, which constituted the Permanent Council, and all the new laws, (it should be remembered) were signed only by the Russian Minister: the Envoys of the two other contracting powers have never ratified these institutions, although their concurrence and signiture were necessary; and the Republic gave positive instructions to that effect to the delegation which was empowered to treat with them; but Russia considered this as a meer

matter

matter of form, and passed by this neglect and fundamental nullity in their proceedings.

'She not only compelled Poland to accede to this treaty, so ruinous to herself, and so advantageous to Russia, but she imposed the yoke of her own perpetual guarranty upon all the new laws, whether they had a reference to police, revenue, or constitutional arrangement, which was proclaimed with drums and trumpets at the gates of Warsaw. This was the last mortal stroke to this expiring commonwealth;—from henceforward, the name of Poland

was

was erased from the catalogue of nations; she was no longer, it is true, plundered by her protectors, or invaded by her auxiliaries; but the Russian Ambassador became the Viceroy of Poland, his creatures were the exclusive members of the Permanent Council, his troops garrisoned her fortresses, and a series of servile Diets, introduced that lethargy which generally accompanies the loss of liberty.

EUROPE, from this period, considered Poland as a vassal of the Empress: but the day of retribution was at hand; a secret discontent announced

nounced its approach—the disposition of the country, and the Turkish war, accelerated her emancipation. The Republic saw with indignation, her southern provinces swarming with Russian troops, burthened by their magazines, infested by their foraging and recruiting parties, treated as tributaries, and subjected to all the horrors of the war between Russia and Turkey. When the Diet was assembled, a powerful sovereign* addressed a celebrated memorial to them, which gave light and information

* Frederick William, the present King of Prussia.

tion to their councils, and stimulated the energy of their proceedings. The result of his generous efforts and laudable exertions, will form a brilliant page in the annals of the eighteenth century.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

TURKISH WARS—ORIENTAL SYSTEM OF RUSSIA.

THE events which we have related, are only the first links of that chain with which Russia had designed to bind Europe; but her system extended farther. The fidelity of the Ottoman Porte to fulfil her engagements with Poland, broached designs which had been formed in the time of Peter the Great; designs con-

conformable to the character of the Empress.

Her troops, in pursuit of the Polish confederates at Bar, did not pay more respect to the Ottoman, than to the territories of Poland; they pillaged the city of Balta, in Moldavia. Upon demands of reparation, the Russians replied by a repetition of the same outrages in various parts of the Turkish dominions, which were the asylum of the Poles. This was a violation of treaties, and of the laws of nations; the Treaty of Pruth forbids that military tyranny which they exercised in Poland; as soon as

the vigilant and enlightened policy of the Duke de Choiseul had decided the opinion of the Porte, or, as she had been roused by the infractions of the Treaties of Carlowitz, of Pruth, and of Constantinople, her declaration of war ensued, which was confined to the necessity of guarding her frontiers. Having guarranteed the Republic of Poland in the entire possession of her dominions, she was interested to prevent her dismemberment. Would to Heaven that other European Courts had the same respect for, and the same firmness and courage to maintain their engagements!

FORTUNE,

FORTUNE, however, seconded injustice; the boldness, the brutal, but firm, courage of her soldiers, gave advantages to the Russians, in spite of the inexperience and awkwardness of their officers. The valour of the Turks became ineffectual, by the continual change of their commanders, by the whimsical projects of some of their officers, which counteracted general systems; and the want of subordination, worse even than cowardice in an army; by the corruption of Russia which pervaded the Divan, and by that pusillanimity which was the associate of Mustapha the Third upon the Turkish Throne.

AFTER several defeats, the Porte signed, in 1774, the Treaty of Kainargik,* a monument of her weakness,

* This peace (says the King of Prussia) produced the independence of the Crimea, the cession of Azoph, of Kinburn, and of Gennikal, to the Russians.——The Turks granted them a free navigation in the Hellespont, in the Propontis, and the Archipelago; beside four millions and a half of roubles, by way of indemnification for the expences of the war.

Oeuvrages Posthumes, vol. v. *p.* 144.

Marshall Romanzow's son arrived at Peterhoff, August the 4th, with the agreeable news of the peace being signed on the 21st of July, by Prince Repnin, (who had powers from the Marshall for that purpose) the principal articles of which are—the independency of the Crimea; the absolute cession

ness, an indication of her supineness, and the herald of future misfortunes.

cession to Russia, of Kinburn, Kerche, and Gennikal, and of all the district between the Bog and the Dnieper; a free navigation in all the Turkish seas, in which is included the passage through the Dardanelles; with all the privileges and immunities which are granted to the most favoured nations, with several stipulations in favour of the inhabitants of Wallachia and Moldavia:---Russia is to return Azoph and Tangorach.—The peace was not ratified till the 8th of November.

London Gazettes of the 23d of August, and of the 6th of December, 1774.

The history, in Dodsley's Annual Register for 1774, p. 6, agrees with the above accounts in substance, but adds, that the treaty consisted of twenty-eight articles, and that no anthentic copy had then been published, of the treaty at length.

fortunes. This was the base upon which Russia raised the superstructure of future designs; this was the instrument with which, as the clear-sighted foresaw, the Empress would break that sceptre which she had intended to depress: from this period, Europe, alarmed, or exaggerating the declamations of the parasites of the Empress, considered the Ottoman Empire at the eve of destruction.

This opinion was formed by vulgar minds, who have sufficient understanding to connect causes and effects, without any allowances for

the

the changes wrought by chance, and by circumstances in human affairs, who confound necessity with accident, and bring political systems into the compass of conjecture and imagination.

But men, whom these idle speculations did not influence, saw Russia in a situation not less exhausted and enfeebled than her enemies:—from the confession of Mareschal Munich himself, the last war but one, with Turkey, had cost Russia two hundred and fifty thousand men; imagination is amazed at the number of her soldiers which perished in

Poland, in Tartary, on the Niester, on the Danube, and in the Archipelago, from 1768 to 1774. Pugatscheff massacred one hundred thousand, the plague destroyed eight hundred thousand men: in 1771 four hundred thousand Calmucks, persecuted by Russia, emigrated into Asia: these losses were repeated in a desert, which counts only twenty inhabitants for a square of three miles; where all the soldiers are pressed; where a soldier is taken from a proportion of thirty-five inhabitants: some thousand Greeks, forced, or enticed from their country, by insidious promises, some foreign

reign colonies, abortive almost in their birth, a collection of vagabonds and adventurers, who found their only refuge in Russia, could not compensate this destructive depopulation: true it is, that swarms of Cossacks and Calmucks, tribes more barbarous than their names, could hardly be regretted; but to lose and to possess is a contradiction; nor could generations be produced with that facility, with which manifestos and tables of population are framed or forged in newspapers; it is also true, that usurpations in Poland, and conquests in Turkey, increased the number of her slaves; but assuredly

Russia

Russia cannot supply her losses and her depopulation, by conquering her neighbours.

The finances, public credit, the fleet, the magazines, all felt the general loss; ruinous schemes, paper money profusely increased, announced the want of resources; it was evident that the Empress, in the midst of her victories and bombast, had earnestly solicited peace through the mediation of Mr. Murray, the English Resident at Constantinople, and of Mr. De Zegelin, the Prussian Minister. It was well known that that brilliant expedition to the

Archipelago,

Archipelago, which astonished Europe, had only produced vast expence, devastation in Greece, a victory due to English experience, to the abilities of Elphinstone, Duggdale, and the Piedmontese Count Masin; but no conquests were retained, no advantages, equal to the expence: prodigality of public money was accompanied with private waste, with magnificence, with largesses almost incredible: the empire, thus decorated with dazzling splendour, could scarcely depend upon two fifths of the revenues of England; her circulation, her commerce, and her public riches, were

far

far from sustaining those amazing enterprizes.

The campaign of 1774 was preceded by sickness and desertion in the exhausted army of Romanzoff, who was saved by the timidity of the Grand Vizir, and his want of knowledge to profit by his advantages. An adventurer, a Cossack, had propagated the spirit of revolt, which had penetrated as far as Moscow, and proved the danger to which a bold man, less cruel, and more sagacious, might reduce an empire in the season of foreign warfare.

FROM all these observations, penetrating politicians foresaw, that in the intoxication of victory, Russia knew no bounds; but that the excess of her prosperity would produce a limitation.

AFTER the peace of Kainargik, the designs of dismembering the Ottoman empire were disclosed. The Empress, exalted by her favourites, by writers, who excited her enthusiasm to emancipate Greece, and to reign at Constantinople, perceiving the delicacy of her situation, and informed of the revolutions which had dethroned so many of her

her predecessors, imagined she could elevate her reputation, and build her security upon the foundations of a new Empire at the Bosphorus. Allegorical prints, engraved at Petersburg, represented this Princess trampelling upon the standard of Mahomet, and repairing the ruins of Greece. Medals were struck with the representation of the Labarum: *—all the arts, and all the talents of Russia, excited this idolatry, and stimulated the design of the destruction of the Ottoman empire.

* The Standard of Constantine, adopted by the Turks, was thus called.

pire in Europe. Partitioning treaties were the offspring of legions of mercenary writers.

By the treaty of Kainargik, the two powers had acknowledged the Crimea to be *free and independent*; they reciprocally engaged not to enter into any intrigues, nor any projects, to interrupt the mutual harmony; but the Court of Petersburg emulated the example of the Roman emperors, who sent generals into Gaul, or into Armenia, to proclaim their manifestos by the sound of the trumpet. Poland exhausted, could not oppose her decrees; in

subtracting

subtracting or misleading the Tartars from their dependence upon the Porte, they contrived to keep them in their own subordination—they aequired harbours and fortresses on the Euxine—a Khan, devoted to their interests, governed those regions, so famous in the dreams of mythology—arsenals, docks, and fortifications, were erected upon those frontiers, with batteries and citadels. This Imperial Colossus placed one foot on Cherson, and the other in Kamschatka. Sahim Gueray, a docile Chieftain, overlooked the nets with which he was encircled—gratitude and interest attached him

him to the Empress; his election was forced, like that of Poland, with the same views, and the same intentions.

THIS Chief, the avowed partizan of Russia, who had sacrificed the national interests to the ambition of the Czarina, excited general discontent. In 1777 he was deprived of his military command, and thirty thousand indignant Tartars chose a successor. Neither his rights nor his powers, secured under a Russian guaranty, could keep him within neutral bounds; his troops advanced to pacify the Crimea, as they had

heretofore pacified Poland. This district, declared independent by a treaty, attested in the most solemn manner, was attacked by a Russian army, who restored the Khan who had been dispossessed. His competitor sought an asylum at Constantinople, solicited succours, and offered to the Porte that appanage which she had lost. The example of Russia might have encouraged the Grand Seignior to interfere in this dispute, and to protect a Chief freely and legally elected: but the faith of treaties, and the dictates of prudence, restrained the Divan; they refused an audience to

the Tartar deputies, and they confined themselves to representations. But though the Russians remained masters of the country, and kept their acquisitions, the Porte had the weakness to acquiesce in the re-establishment of a Chief protected by the Empress.

These pacific views, this imprudent concession, emboldened Russia; at the same instant she started new difficulties, and proposed a treaty of commerce, the principles of which revealed her intentions. Though this treaty was the disgrace of the empire, and though an in-

surrection had put Constantinople in danger, the same Councils, the same inconsiderate moderation governed Turkey; and in 1779, she signed an additional convention presented to her as the seal of an eternal reconciliation.

These sacrifices, it was easy to foretel, would produce no more than a momentary truce, and that new disputes would spring from this source. That policy must be condemned, which avoids a war by those concessions, which assure to adversaries a still greater facility of hostile operations.

THE Porte had soon after a new danger to encounter, while the Empress had hopes of a new Ally. Whether it was the effect of an inconstancy peculiar to the Cabinet of Petersburg, or by the operation of some connections with the House of Austria, her treaty with the King of Prussia had expired. The Court of Vienna had forgot her old fears and her ancient principles; eight years before, she would not suffer the Russians to extend their influence in Moldavia, nor allow them to approach her frontiers, nor pass the Danube and give laws to Turkey. The Empress Queen, and Prince

Kaunitz, influenced by those maxims, had entered into a negociation with the Porte *; but the death of Maria-Theresa introduced new systems; distrust was changed into reciprocal confidence. Before this period, the peace of Teschen had been concluded under the mediation of Catherine the Second. A mysterious interview between that Princess and the Emperor had taken place, which had united interests so apparently discordant. A secret treaty confirmed

* The King of Prussia's Memoirs relate the alarm created in the Court of Vienna, by the ambition of Russia at this time.

formed the fears of Europe, and engaged the general attention touching those projects, upon which this formidable association was grounded. Such was the crisis in which the Empress, in 1782, invaded the Crimea.

Sahim Gueray, the mercenary and felonious instrument of the Russian policy, abdicated his dignity: but did he surrender it to his constituents? No; he sold it to the Empress: he sold that sovereignty to which he had no claim. This elected Chief sold his masters and his electors; but this cession was ridicu-

lous. If the King of Poland had sold his throne, would the rest of Europe ratify the bargain? Immediately a Russian army plundered those provinces which were rendered free in 1777, subjected them to her laws, and an apologising manifesto followed the invasion.

When Tamerlane, Attila, and Nadir Shaw, subjected their neighbours, equity was a slight obstacle; without scruples, and without chicane, they exercised their powers; nor did shame colour or masque their injustice. In our days we are told, that politeness, humanity, and philosophy,

philosophy, violate treaties, dismember states, spread discord, and legitimate usurpations. Poland abuses her liberty: slavery, it is said, should relieve her from anarchy. Are dissentions excited in Sweden, public liberty becomes the pretext. —Ignorant countries, like the Crimea, should be polished by force of arms.

In her apologising manifesto, the Empress announced, that she had lost the product of her victories, if Sahim Gueray did not remain under her protection:—that was to say, that she had consecrated the independence

independence of the Tartars, and the freedom of their elections, so long as those franchises were subservient to her interests. By a parity of reasoning, the Porte could usurp the sovereign authority of this district. Thus the independence of the Crimea, unconditionally established in 1774, consisted in receiving the law from either of those powers, whenever one of them should deem it expedient to dispose of that sovereignty. According to this manifesto, it was the love of order and public tranquillity, which, with the divine assitance, had introduced the Russian arms into the Crimea;

which

had exercised a tyrannical sway, disposed of the sovereignty, appeased revolts, and given a supremacy over the Sovereign himself.

All these measures were *dictated solely* by the imperial regard for *humanity*, grounded upon a *conviction*, that Tartars could not appreciate the *value* of *independence*. Lastly, by the right of ancient *conquest*, which had been annihilated by the treaty of 1774, and by the only method of ensuring the blessings of a *lasting* and permanent peace.

By the extension of such argu-

ments,

ments, the Czarina had a right to the possession of Turkey. The *ennui* of debates, the care of tranquillity, the security of good neighbourhood, would have given similar possessory claims to Russia in the surrounding provinces. Georgia, Moldavia, as well as the Crimea, would furnish subjects of mutual discord. Step by step, this progressive argument would reach Egypt, and every province connected with, and tributary to the Porte, which might, from those circumstances, create alarm and inquietudes; so that, from a chain of reasoning, it might be ultimately and justly inferred, that nothing

thing but the universal subjection of Turkey could insure a solid and permanent pacification.

Upon the intelligence of this enterprize, the Porte, suspended between surprise and indignation, prepared a formidable resistance.—If a patriotic policy had had its due influence, she would have attended to her safety, her just resentment, and popular tumults; she would have rigged her squadrons and struck her tents: but a powerful influence, or an unseasonable moderation, delayed those enterprizes which true policy en-

enjoined: apprehensions of disasters were artfully suggested—the co-operation of the Emperor was magnified—the auxiliary of Russia ready to act, as it was said, with a hundred thousand men. Those temporizing councils prevailed over motives of self-defence; and although Constantinople, taken in forty-nine days by Mahomet the Second, had remained defenceless since that period, and without any barrier towards the Black Sea, a convention, signed in January, 1784, authorised the usurpation of the Crimea and of Couban, but upon articles which were infringed

fringed with the same facility with which they had been framed.*

GEORGIA and Cabartas soon afterwards experienced the same fate; the

* This convention was called, from one of the Turkish Palaces near Constantinople, where it was signed, the Treaty of Ainaly-Kavack. Of her new acquisitions in the Black Sea, it must be acknowledged, that the Empress has made the best use; and her policy has proceeded upon a most enlarged, judicious, and liberal system: by an Edict of the 22d of February, 1784, Cherson has been declared a free port; a general toleration of all religions, and a complete freedom of trade and commerce, has been granted by the Czarina to all persons who should form settlements in those districts.

Chalmers's Collection of Treaties, vol. i. *p.* 14.

the Prince Heraclius was bribed; Egypt was inflamed by the intrigues of Russia: every where, particularly in Moldavia and Wallachia, and in the Archipelago, her consuls were incendiaries employed to corrupt the vassals of the Porte, and to excite insurrections. Since the treaty of 1774, two of these emissaries had been punished, and the Empress regarded their punishment as an infraction of the laws of nations. In the midst of peace some Greeks were taken away by force;* if Russian ships

* Before the present war, all ships were searched strictly, and examined by the Turks, in

ships entered the Propontis, it was by false representations of the number of their crews, and tonnage of their vessels;† every day gave rise

in passing through the Dardanelles, &c. to prevent the Greek subjects of the Porte from emigrating to the Russian settlements in the Black Sea; and probably some provisions were made in the treaty in 1774, or in other subsequent conventions, to prevent those emigrations, which were artfully encouraged, and which are reported to have considerably increased.

† This passage seems to indicate, that ships of force were restrained from passing the Dardanelles, and navigating those seas, and that the permission conceded by the Treaty of Kainargik, was limited to ships of a certain size, tonnage, &c. This treaty has not been published in any general collection;

to some vexatious pretensions, and they proceeded to enter into the secret councils of the Divan, to interfere in her administration, to influence the choice, and to exact the dismission of public officers.

THE

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lection; perhaps the most valuable present which could be made to the political world, would be a continuation of that useful abridgement, the *Droit Publique de l'Europe*, by the Abbé Mably in three small volumes, from the Treaty of Paris in 1763 where it ends, to the present critical period. It appears, from Capt. Sutherland's Tour, p. 346, that men of war, of all nations, are prohibited from sailing through the Dardanelles to Constantinople, unless they should have an Ambassador on board, or by special favour, and an express order from the Grand Seignor.

The observer of these differences, so difficult to terminate, after multiplied treaties and conventions, must necessarily ask, What would be the issue of this war of increasing grievances and conventions, each of which has generated new encroachments and new troubles? The demands of Russia increased in proportion to the condescension or hesitation of the Divan; and the opinions of Europe were divided upon the consequences at this crisis; when she saw the Second Catherine realise the fable of Sesostris, departing with inconvenient pomp from the frozen plains of Ingria, to display her pow-

ers on the embouchures of the rivers in the Black Sea, to penetrate into new conquests desolated since their submission, with a dazzling and imposing procession; received on the banks of the Dniepet by a King of Poland, in the Tauride by the Emperor of Germany, and marching with a convoy of forty thousand men, to take possession of a Mussulman country, under the eyes of the successor of the Khaliphs. While this Princess displayed an Oriental magnificence before a people, whom, in her last manifesto, she had called an Asylum of Freebooters; while the Greek description of the road to Bi-

zantium appeared upon the gateway at Cherson, she disquieted the Turks by new diplomatic hostilities.

THIS pageant, this ostentation, at length roused the lion from his slumber;—the Empress was scarcely returned to Petersburg, before her Envoy was imprisoned in the Seven Towers;—the Black Sea was covered with ships;—the Turkish troops were marching through a territory, which had recently re-echoed her triumphal acclamations.

POLITICAL events, and the revolutions which were in contemplation

tion in many parts of Europe, seemed to favour a resolution, which was just and decisive:—most Cabinets were tired of the Russian haughtiness, or disturbed by her projects; and her intimacy with Austria could not lessen this anxiety. Penetration could not reject the surmise, that a secret jealousy subsisted between the two Imperial Courts, and that the Emperor, an enlightened Prince, having the choice of vicinity, would prefer the exhausted Turks in his alliances, to the Russians, whose preponderance was every where converted into a sovereign influence. Since the peace of Belgrade, the good intelligence

between

between Vienna and the Porte, had not been interrupted;—the Turks respected the misfortunes of Maria Theresa; nor did they profit by the embarrassments of 1740, nor by those of the seven years war. Some light clouds were seen to interrupt this harmony: but the Divan had dispersed them with moderation: the Bosnian limits were amicably arranged, and the districts of Buckovine were ceded by Turkey with unexpected facility.

From those circumstances, it was supposed that the Court of Vienna would act, at least, the part of a simple auxiliary, if she did not re-

present the character of a dignified neutrality.

Though the principal, and oldest Ally of Turkey,* occupied by internal troubles, was indecisive in her political system, and could only relieve her by negociations, many other States offered secret services.—The Empress had cooled the attachment of England, by a conduct which in London was called ingratitude.—Detached from Prussia, she had promised her guarantee for the Bavarian exchange; and Berlin considered the Court of Petersburg as the Emperor's

* France.

peror's associate. Poland, meditating revenge, regarded the Turks as their protectors; and lastly, Sweden had equal interests to defend, to render her guarantee, so often slighted, respectable; and to resume, after twenty years interval, her influence in the North.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

RUSSIAN INFLUENCE IN SWEDEN — SWEDISH CONSTITUTION — AFFAIRS OF FINLAND.

THIS State was the most aggrieved by Russia; the power which deprived Sweden of so many provinces in the beginning, governed her by a corrupt and despotic influence, in the sequel of this century. The conduct of Charles the Twelfth, the pride, and the misfortune of Sweden, had produced a revolution in the govern-

ment,

ment, in which the past only was considered, without any regard to future grievances. Experience of evils often affects nations too much, to allow them to weigh and to examine their remedial provisions; the inconvenience of hasty measures are often long concealed, till futurity discovers their fatal consequences.

The impetuous discontent of Sweden, or of some demagogues, destroyed the balance of the component parts of her constitution.

In the recess of her Diets, the power lodged in the Senate, controuled

the

the royal authority; the nomination and qualification of senators were given, with the whole legislative power, to the States. The executive power was subjected to a body, each member of which might be dismissed by the States; and the judicial power was vested in its Committees. During their sessions, the complete executive power was vested, without limit or balance, in a commission of the States, a body of seven, perhaps eight hundred men. The royal authority was confined to mere representation; the King could not dismiss an impertinent servant; and, in Mr. Sheridan's words, "he appeared

"peared only as a state pageant, de-
"corated for holidays and court fes-
"tivals."*

THIS constitution favoured all the defects, all the disorders of internal policy, and all the schemes of foreign

* Mr. Sheridan (the son of the late Manager of the Dublin Theatre, who has exemplified his theory in the education of his children, and to whose early friendship, and valuable labours, the Translator is happy to advert) was Secretary to Sir John Goodrick, when the revolution, which he has recorded, took place, on the 13th of August, 1772. He was afterwards Secretary at War in Ireland, but he was dismissed in 1789, after the great question of the Regency was decided, with a pension of 800l. a year, for life.

reign adversaries; and consequently, by the treaty of Newstadt, in 1721, the Czar Peter became its guarantee.

EXPERIENCE is the surest test of government: principles may be condemned, when attended with pernicious effects. What was the portrait of Sweden before 1772? General weakness, shameful neglect in all her departments; an inconsiderate war in 1757, unskilfully, dishonourably conducted; the love of glory subdued by the spirit of intrigue, and the welfare of the State by a criminal selfishness: places conferred, and powers torn from their Monarch by

by a faction; all was venal; each suffrage, and each majority, the objects of mercantile calculation. "Corruption was so transcendant," says Frederick the Great, "that at one "time a French, and at another, a "Russian faction prevailed, while "the national party never predominated."

RUSSIA played the principal part in this scene of confusion; meditating the arbitration of the Swedish government, no opportunity was lost to profit by the general anarchy; and her arbitrary fancy had decided, in 1750, the contested bounds of Finland.

RUSSIA

RUSSIA combined with France and Austria; from the dislike of Elizabeth to the King of Prussia,* produced the demolition of the feeble remnant of royal authority, as the first fruits of that combination, accompanied with mortifying insults to the King and Queen; and that war in 1756-7, where Sweden followed as a vassal in procession, without interest, reason, or justice, and saw her brave legions, sacrificed to the frivolity of her government.

INTRIGUES and bribes at Stockholm

* The late King was Brother-in-law, and the present King of Sweden the Nephew of Frederick the Great.

holm were doubled since the accession of the Second Catherine: the predominance of the party of the Bonnets was secured; she dictated all their resolutions; and while she laboured to introduce anarchy into Poland, she confirmed and ratified it in Sweden. Nothing remained to effect her schemes, except the dethronement of the King; when the intrepidity of Gustavus the Third prevented this last attempt, restored the empire of the laws, circumscribed that liberty which consisted only in the sale of public welfare, and banished for ever, that despotism of corruption under which she had so long been afflicted.

THE Empress had engaged the King of Prussia in a convention, to guaranty the Swedish government as established by the treaty of Newstadt in 1721. From hence we may estimate her surprise at this revolution. "Anger and vengeance," says Frederick the Second, "would have "had an immediate operation, had "not the Turks firmly resisted the "hard and imperious terms of peace "which she had proposed. The "King of Sweden, aware of the dan-"ger by which he was menaced, la-"boured a conciliation with Den-"mark, that he might be engaged "with a single adversary."

HERE

HERE we have the most revered, and the most decisive evidence of the designs of the Empress against Sweden: after this, it is no less true than it is astonishing, that in a reply, contained in a libel, avowed by the Cabinet of Petersburg, entitled, "*Observations and Historical Eclair-*"*cissements*," studiously circulated in Finland, effrontery could misrepresent those precautions of Gustavus, against the joint animosity of Denmark and Russia, under the idea of a voluntary and fanciful aggression, which the least menace from Russia would have prevented.

Assuredly Russia was not then in a formidable state:—Had the King of Sweden profited by her losses, the absence, sickness, and misery of her troops, the terror and indications of revolt, upon the near approach of Pugatscheff, he had nothing to fear; save only, an abusive and sophistical manifesto from the Russian Ministers.

This Prince was governed by other maxims: he saved the Empress from new dangers; and public notoriety will prove a chain of solicitude, to maintain harmony and good

good understanding between the two Courts.

NOTWITHSTANDING this determination, the Russian intrigues increased; the slightest pretexts for discontent were magnified in Sweden by misrepresentations;—emissaries were found in her provinces, to inflame the people by false insinuations.

AFTER the peace of Abo, Russia had secretly laboured to detach Finland from Sweden: beside this enterprize, dictated by her ruling principle of usurpation, the vast projects of the Czarina induced her to pre-

vent the efforts of Sweden to assist her Ally, and to attack Russia in a vulnerable place. At one time, she fomented the spirit of revolt; at another, she promised the Finlanders independency. The Baron Sprengporten, loaded with the favours of the King of Sweden, and invested with great employments in Finland, with every mark of confidence and bounty, was gained by the offers of the Empress, and had no scruples to betray his King, his Country, and the most sacred obligations.

A RUSSIAN officer, under the pretext of curiosity, had, in 1786, visited

sited the posts of Finland, reconnoitered those which might be attacked, and endeavoured to sound the disposition, and to corrupt the principles of the inhabitants.

This clandestine war engaged the unceasing vigilance of the Swedish King: of the secret designs of Russia he could not doubt; but the moment of open resistance was not come; and danger was concealed, lest the kingdom should be involved in a premature rupture.

At length the Porte was roused from its lethargy.—To indicate the aggressor would be idle:—assured-

ly, tired with the hostilities of ten years, she was not obliged to attend the visit of the Russians at the gates of Constantinople.—The treaty with Sweden, in 1759, enabled her to solicit succours.—The interest and engagements of Gustavus concurred with her desire.

RUSSIA immediately resolved to cripple Sweden, by those measures which had ruined Poland, enslaved the Crimea, and subjected Courland. The embers of the flame in 1772 were revived—the Count Rosamouski resumed the part of his predecessors as Minister of the Empress—every engine was employed to excite a faction

a faction against the King—the Russian Envoy's conduct was most indiscreet—public seduction was evident in his words and actions, in the capital, and under the King's eyes:—no Ambassador ever braved so audaciously the respect due to sovereigns, the rights of hospitality, and the duties of his function. The Count Rosamouski had forgot discretion;—his declarations were outrages, appeals to the people against their Sovereign:—bold and insidious, these hostile notes infused rancor and gall into the hearts of too many.—The government did not forget, in this conjuncture, what was due to public tranquillity and the

laws

laws of nations.—The King declined to acknowledge his powers as a Minister, and compelled him to abandon the theatre of his intrigues.*

The Empress not only justified, but complained of the dismission of her Minister:—Europe was shocked at the conduct of the Court of Petersburg, which treated self-defence as a proof of hostility.—Neither respect for Kings, nor prudence, nor conciliation, formed any part of her conduct;

* Of the changes in the Swedish Constitution since 1772, and the Russian intrigues in that Country, an admirable account is given in the "View of the present State of Sweden, by M. de Cattau," p. 90.

conduct; even peace was proposed with insulting language.

When victory had abandoned her arms, artifice succeeded; her agents tampered with the officers of the Finland troops—the most despotic Court in the universe resounded the word Liberty in the ears of the Swedish subjects: some of whom forgot their allegiance to their King and Country, deserted them in the hour of danger, and entered into a traiterous correspondence.—A terrible example; an awful lesson, for those States whose destiny placed their interests, in opposition to the designs of Russia!

CHAP

CHAP. IX.

NEGOCIATIONS OF ENGLAND AND PRUSSIA WITH THE CZARINA—INTERESTS OF THE MARITIME POWERS—THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RUSSIA, AS A NAVAL POWER IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

THE inflexible pride of that Court prevailed, at the moment of the bursting of a storm; when Poland was ready to break her chains, and

Prussia

Prussia to second her laudable designs; when the Cabinets of Potsdam and of London were engaged in the same interest, all mediation was scornfully rejected: she received the offer of the Swedish King, to reconcile her to the Porte, with disdain; which compelled him to the necessity of defensive measures, and the completion of his engagements with Turkey.

The mediation of England was equally rejected, without regard to their alliance, to past service, or the slight commercial ties by which they

they were allied.* The English liberality was shocked with stratagems, with disdain, with hostile intimations, from a Court which owed her eternal obligations. The expedition to the Archipelago was solely to be ascribed to English aid and assistance, and to them the glory of it should be ascribed: the disabled fleet of the Empress, harboured, repaired, and victualled by England, could never have cleared the Channel

* Our Commercial Treaty with Russia expired in 1786—it was signed the 20th of July, 1766—it consisted of twenty-six articles, and was to be in force for twenty years.——*Chalmers's Collection of Treaties, vol. II. p. 13.*

Channel without the skill of British pilots; nor would they have burned the Turkish fleet, had it not been for the aid of the first of the maritime Powers. If England enabled the Russian flag to appear without dishonor before the Dardanelles, and zealously befriended her negociations, what was her acknowledgment? A desertion when England was almost overpowered by her enemies,—that armed neutrality which deprived them of those mariners they procured from the Baltic, which enabled Holland to carry on an illicit trade, which speciously gave the title of the Protectress of

Marine

Marine Freedom to the Empress, but which, in reality, was a mortal wound to the importance of England.

The English capitals and traders are the great resource of the Russian commerce, the vital principles of her tardy circulation; though the balance of trade is a loss of near one million annually to England, though English ships constitute the half of those vessels which arrive annually at Cronstadt, the Empress has procrastinated the renewal of their commercial treaty, eluding the solicitations of the English Cabinet, promising

mising much, and terminating nothing, the negociation has languished, and the effects of their projected arrangements are as humiliating as they are ridiculous.

THE Allies of England, invited the Empress to reflect upon the proposed joint arbitration of Great-Britain and Prussia. The successor of Frederick the Great, ambitious more of the title of a peace-maker, than of a conqueror, held the balance with a firm and impartial hand, and proposed an amicable adjustment.—His reign daily acquired, without the eclat of war, that reputation,

which wise and able measures, the wisdom of councils, the moderation and just management of power, never fail to bestow. The King of Prussia had discovered a mine of mischief formed in Poland, by Russian emissaries, equally dangerous to Prussia, as well as to Turkey. An exclusive alliance was projected between that Republic and Russia; by the energy of his declarations, and the conviction of his resolution, the Court of Berlin warded off this stroke, and gave new life to Poland. Whether the Russian Ministers were blinded by the facility and possibility of a great event, or whether Catherine,

rine, intoxicated by success, consulted more her favourites than her interest, she rejected, with disdain, the idea of mediation, she braved all risques, and the moderation of the King of Prussia solely prevented a formidable alliance of five Powers against Russia.

CHAP. X.

CONCLUSION—GENERAL REMARKS—SUMMARY OF THIS WORK.*

SUCH are the historical features of the present time, of which all Europe is a witness. Her Kings have viewed

* This conclusive chapter is, perhaps, the most valuable part of this work. A short and comprehensive account of the political interests of the different States in Europe is much wanted; and it is very extraordinary,

viewed perhaps with too much indifference, the progress of this enterprising

traordinary, that, at the present crisis, an able pamphlet has not appeared upon Continental affairs, nor upon the part which this country might act as the arbiter of Europe.

According to what, I believe, may be considered as the most authentic compilation of parliamentary debates, before they were regularly published in newspapers, in 1773-4. I mean the debates in the Lilliputian club, where the names of the principal speakers are travestied in the Gentleman's Magazine, the principal debates in the days of Sir Robert Walpole turned upon Foreign treaties and Continental interests.

This Chapter resembles that short, but excellent Abridgment of the State of Europe, by Sir William Temple, in 1673, presented

prising policy, by which the laws of nations have been annulled, the faith of

presented to the Duke of Ormond by that great man at the end of his second embassy, in answer to his short question, "What was necessary to be done?"—or what part this country should take at that crisis.

It were much to be desired that some able man, in the diplomatic line, would favour the Public with some chart of the present schemes, alliances, connections, and interests, of the Continent—I say the Public, because publicity is the vital principle of a free country; information and intelligence can alone animate their exertions, and direct their energy.

For such a character as Sir William Temple we shall look in vain, while our embassies are bestowed merely from parliamentary

of treaties has disappeared, and the abuse of power has countenanced usurpation.

mentary interest, or rendered commodious for men who cannot live conveniently at home. This great man was patronized by the Duke of Ormond, in consequence of his exertions in the Irish parliament after the Restoration, where, as representative of the county of Carlow, he appeared as the first speaker, and the ablest member, of that Assembly. Some time ago I was much disappointed in my application to the nobleman who inherits his name and virtues, for some early memorials of Sir William Temple, as this part of his life has not been dwelt upon by any of his biographers; and these anecdotes to which I allude, were collected, with some materials for a parliamentary history of Ireland, from the earliest period to the Revolution, in which I have been

pation. This vast empire, which, for twenty years, has spread terror, corruption, despotism, and war, embraces all varieties of climate, and comprehends every species of resource.

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been for some time engaged, and which is at length completed. This work I intend to form upon Mr. Hatsell's plan, and to render it entertaining by some memoirs of the Duke of Ormond, from papers communicated to me by a particular friend, the heir of that illustrious nobleman, to whom I have the honour of being nearly allied: and I shall leave it to my country, if I may hope that a sufficient period is allotted to me, to accomplish so laborious an undertaking, by the superintendance of the printing, which will necessarily require much typographical accuracy.

source. Seas inaccessible to European fleets; deserts or enslaved countries are her frontiers: hitherto, impressions upon her territory have been hastily deemed impracticable. While her adversaries remain upon the defensive, swarms of undisciplined savages emigrate from their habitations, and destroy extensive countries in a campaign. Prussia and Poland still bleed from those ravages; when troops, which are mowed down without being subdued, are animated by pillage, by fanaticism, or by the ambition of their Sovereign, who, in losing soldiers, only loses slaves;

slaves;—woe to those States which border upon this destructive Power!

PEACE must be purchased by sacrifices, or secured by preparations commensurate to the danger. Russia menaces at the same time, Turkey, the North, and Germany: the reduction of the one, would accelerate the conquest of the others. Solitary resistance is vain, against an empire which can produce soldiers, like grains of sand, whose policy has no other principles than those of interest, and whose bold maxims correspond with that fortune, which has so long favoured her projects.

BY

By the schemes she has executed in Poland, that Republic, and Courland, are warned of the danger which threatens them, if they should not seriously advert to timely provisions of their safety.

Before the Russian was united with the Austrian army, Frederick the Great was surprised at the rapidity of their progress; he had seen them penetrate into the heart of his States, and lay Prussia under contribution, a country always exposed to invasion, while Poland and Courland are under Russian influence. Russia, as the auxiliary of

the

the chief of the German empire, and associated in his projects, can attack Prussia on the south as well as the north, aid the Emperor by her diversions, and menace the liberty of Germany.

SWEDEN maintains her situation, thanks to the firmness and precaution of her King; but recent events, reveal the secret of that slender thread, upon which her tranquillity depends, and demonstrates the necessity of a balance which may place the Empress in due bounds of limitation.

A SIMILAR interest should affect

the

the politics of Denmark, if the memory of their absurd rivality with Sweden, and the prejudices of her ministers, should no longer fascinate that country:—can she not perceive that her alliance is an instrument which she lends to Russia to disquiet her neighbours, and to tyrannize over the North? Is it not clear, that in lending her influence to weaken, or to crush the powers on the Baltic, she will ultimately contribute to her own depression? What would be her security, if the neighbouring powers should be disabled, or subdued by Russia? Every thing conspires to induce Denmark

to

to a mutual defensive alliance, to maintain the equilibrium, to counterbalance the preponderance of Russia, to imitate that noble system, the Germanic league, the rampart of weak states against the power of a great empire.

THE

* In consequence of the scheme which was formed for the exchange of Bavaria, for the Austrian Netherlands, the Germanic league or union, between some of the Electors, and the greater part of the considerable Princes of the Empire, was signed at Berlin, on the 23d of July, 1785; not only to prevent that exchange, but also to preserve inviolate the present Germanic system and constitution. This was one of the last acts of Frederick the Great, for he died in the following year, August the 17th, 1786.——*Dr. Towers's Life of Frederick the Great, vol.* ii, *p.* 421.

THE maritime and commercial states, the South, Italy, and Venice, in particular, are affected by the same interests, and should participate in the same apprehensions. Should Russia establish her power in the Mediterranean, human foresight cannot appreciate or comprehend, the wide and vast effects of such a revolution.

To all these, I shall subjoin the supereminent consideration of the happiness of Russia herself, of her true glory, of her national interests, sacrificed to the eclat of a transitory reign, whose trophies are stained

strained with blood:—that nation, which has surprised Europe with the rapidity of her civilization, should endeavour to consummate that great work; to which peace is essential:—the natural aptitude of that robust, flexible, and penetrating people, to repair the ravages of successive wars, would facilitate this design:—they yet want arts, manufactures, internal and foreign commerce, capitals, population; and her civilization does not extend beyond Moscow:—this cannot be the work of a Sovereign, engrossed with ideas of territorial aggrandizement; nor of favourites trembling

at

at her nod, at their future destiny, and providing asylums in the neighbouring States as refugees from despotism:—this great donation is reserved to the nobility, to the nation itself, formed to give examples of virtue, which decorate humanity:—it is alone by exerting her activity in the center of the State, that her wounds can be healed, and that she can support the inconvenient and gigantic extent of her empire.

The Russians still proudly remember that Prince, who, unintentionally perhaps, prepared them for freedom, while they were civilized as slaves.

Of all the plans and schemes of that great man, the most admirable, tho' the least noticed, was that of abandoning two thirds of that vast empire to bears and to nature; his wish to concenter the whole population in the provinces which are within a practicable distance of the capital, and to strengthen his country by consolidation. This policy is a satire upon the present reign; a policy assuredly adopted by the intelligent part of the Russian community;—they have too much good sense, not to lament that all her powers have been turned against her genius and disposition, against her interest, and

to

to see the destruction of her resources, without the acquisition of any solid advantage;—of what moment are vain and pompous conquests, which exist only in sounds, in hymns, in Te Deums, and in festivals! *

* This sentence has been extended by the Translator: no other liberty has been taken in this English version, save only that of dividing it into Chapters, and adding Notes. This Work has been authenticated as the work of the King of Sweden, though it cannot be supposed that it was compiled without assistance; as the Posthumous Works of Frederick the Great were revised by the Prussian Minister, Count Hertzberg. No pains have been spared to make the translation and the printing as accurate as possible.

It

May the successor to this throne, that Prince, whom Europe has observed in his travels, accompanied with such modesty, an example of private virtues, and whose benign inclinations may heal the wounds of those fruitless wars :—May the Grand

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It is to be hoped the Public will accept of apologies for any mistake in a work undertaken in a period of indisposition, and of political turbulence, at the General Election; which could not (the Public must suppose) be accompanied with pleasant reflections, not to be altogether favourable to the literary pursuits of the Translator.

This note was added to the first edition, which by the shameful neglect of the Printer, was very inaccurate and peculiarly defective; but this impression, it is hoped, will be found to be free from those objections.

Grand Duke, be no longer guided by this absurd and romantic policy;—May he substitute, in the place of fallacious grandeur, that true greatness, which results from the moderation of Princes, and from the prosperity of their people.

FINIS.

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